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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Head Seeks To End Iraq-UN Disputes

NC1901153193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1418 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Jan (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has said that the dispatch of additional UN troops to serve in the buffer zone between Iraq and Kuwait requires a resolution from the UN Security Council defining the nature of the troops' mission.

In an exclusive statement to MENA today, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that the Arab League is willing to use its good offices to resolve the differences between Iraq and Iran. We have proposed to do that and are waiting for the two countries to ask us to play that role, he added.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that Arab differences should be resolved through the Arab League to avoid escalating these differences. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid called for the unification of Arab and Islamic ranks to deal effectively with the challenges facing the Islamic world.

The Arab League secretary general said that there is a need to form an Arab court of justice to end differences between Arab countries in a civilized and legal manner. He expressed hope that this will take place as soon as possible.

Concerning yesterday's raids against Iraq, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the Arab League issued a statement yesterday commenting on this matter. He added that the Arab League continues to make efforts to end this escalation. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid once again voiced regret over the use of the policy of military escalation against Iraq, reiterating his rejection of the use of force as a way of resolving international disputes.

Arab League Hopes Clinton Will Reconsider Policies

NC2001151293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1443 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Ambassador 'Adnan 'Imran, Arab League assistant secretary general, said he hopes the new Bill Clinton-led U.S. Administration will reconsider numerous aspects of U.S. Middle East policy, mentioning specifically the unlimited U.S. aid to Israel represented by the loan guarantees and considerable military aid. Commenting on President Clinton's assumption of office today, 'Imran called on the new U.S. Administration to end its policy of double standards in implementing international legitimacy's resolutions in the region. He noted what he described as the immunity Israel enjoys against the UN Security Council resolutions at a time when it commits violations against the human rights of the Palestinian people.

Human Rights Group Urges 'Decisive' Stand on Iraq

NC2001083293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2013 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Jan (MENA)—The Arab Human Rights Organization today expressed regret at the renewed Western alliance forces' attack on Iraq.

In a statement today, the organization also expressed regret because the UN resolutions repeatedly used as a pretext for attacks on Iraq are blatantly overlooked in numerous cases, primarily the Palestinian issue and Bosnia-Hercegovina.

The organization asked the international community for a decisive position against all forms of attack on Iraq.

Iraq Attacks Called 'Cover' for U.S. Policies

NC2001083393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2011 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Jan (MENA)—The Arab Lawyers Federation today denounced Western attacks on Iraqi civilian and military targets over the past three days.

In a statement today, the federation's General Secretariat said this Western method of implementing international legitimacy is no more than a cover to implement U.S. policies. It asks: Otherwise, where is the enthusiasm to act against the Serbs, their crimes in Bosnia-Hercegovina, and to compel Israel to halt its brutal aggression against the Palestinian people.

The statement called on the Arab League and Arab kings and presidents to intervene to pressure Western alliance governments to halt their aggression against the Iraqi people.

Jordan, Iraq, PLO Delegates Hold Agricultural Meet

JN1501174893 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1540 GMT 15 Jan 93

[Text] Dar'ah, South Syria, 15 Jan (SANA)—Delegations from Jordan, Iraq, and the PLO arrived in Damascus this afternoon to attend the meetings of the 22d session of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development.

The Jordanian delegation is led by Agriculture Minister Fayiz al- Khasawinah; the Iraqi delegation by Justice Minister Shabib Lazim al-Maliki; and the Palestinian delegation by Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi.

The delegations were received by As'ad Mustafa, minister of agriculture and agrarian reform; Dr. Yahya Bakkur, director general of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development; and senior officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform.

Islamic Affairs

Reportage on Week-Long Islamic Conference in Cairo

Algerian Minister Arrives

NC1701100393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0822 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—Algerian Minister of Religious Affairs Sassi Lamouri arrived in Cairo this morning for a week-long visit to Egypt during which he will attend the four-day Fifth Congress of the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs, due to open in Cairo on Tuesday [19 January].

The conference will discuss a number of issues concerning the Islamic world, most importantly the coordination of Arab and Islamic countries efforts against terrorism using the cloak of religion. It will also explain Islam's stand on various Arab and international issues.

Some 150 personalities from various Arab and Islamic countries, including 35 awqaf ministers, clergymen, and muftis from the Arab world, will take part in the conference.

Mubarak Addresses Conference

NC1901142593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has said that the critical circumstances confronting the Islamic nation today make it necessary for the rulers, citizens, ulema, and thinkers of that nation to resort to reason in dealing with various issues and problems. This came in a message which the president addressed to the Fifth General Conference of the Higher Council on Islamic Affairs. The conference began its meetings this morning in Cairo. The speech was delivered on the president's behalf by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi.

At this juncture, President Mubarak said, the Islamic nation must close its ranks and create a society capable of coping with scientific and technological progress. The Islamic nation needs to bridge the scientific gulf separating it from the advanced countries, he declared.

President Mubarak said Islam calls for work, cooperation, and respect for the rights of others and frowns upon violence, extremism, and terror. President Mubarak said that the conference should find a way to reconcile past values with the needs of progress. President Mubarak said the conference should endeavor to place the Islamic people on the right path. He added that Islam cannot be blamed for terror, malice, or bloodletting, for such acts are perpetrated by misguided individuals.

The president said that the aim of all God-given religions is to help man live in peace with himself and others. He added that the problems of the Islamic people will not be resolved except in a framework of cooperation and coordination. He called on all Muslim leaders and people to resolve their differences. There is no place in today's world for small entities and isolated countries, he stated.

Saudi Minister Addresses Conference

LD2001200093 Riyadh SPA in English 1928 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, Jan 20, SPA—The Saudi Minister of Haj and Endowments 'Abd-al-Wahab 'Abd-al-Wasi has submitted a paper to the fifth general conference of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, in which he reviewed the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the service of Islam and Muslims and gave prominence to the efforts of the custodian of the two holy mosques to support Muslim minorities.

He said the offerings of King Fahd, the Saudi Government and institutions does not stop, but reaches individuals and groups to help Muslim brothers. He pointed to the huge funds allocated every year to the support of Muslim minorities and establish mosques, schools and hospitals for them.

Meanwhile, in an interview with Egyptian television, 'Abd-al-Wasi confirmed the depth of brotherly relations binding Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He commented on several Islamic issues and pointed to the efforts of the Kingdom to realize solidarity in the Islamic nation, during the interview which was aired last night. He also focused on the Saudi monarch's efforts to resolve many Islamic issues.

Turkish Minister Addresses Meeting

TA2001090693 Ankara Turkiye Radyolari Network in Turkish 2100 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] State Minister Ekrem Ceyhun has declared that differences of opinion within the Islamic community are turned into a quarrel of interests, it could divide the Islamic world. Ceyhun was addressing the fifth High Islamic Council meeting held in Cairo.

In his speech, Ceyhun remarked that the unifying aspect of Islam is shadowed by radical arguments and armed clashes because of certain differences and intellectual disagreements. Citing Ataturk's statement that the most genuine [word indistinct] in life is science, Ceyhun noted that the soundest way to exercise moral values is through scientific work and that narrow-minded thinking must be abandoned. Ceyhun explained that the relations with the Christian world must be directed towards sharing human prosperity and cooperation, and not division and confrontation.

Palestinian Affairs

Reaction to Knesset Lifting PLO Contact Ban

'Arafat-Rabin Talks Proposed

LD2001143893 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The PLO today welcomed the Israeli parliament's decision to cancel the law issued in 1986 which prevents Israelis from contacting the PLO, and expressed its readiness to enter into serious negotiations with Israel leading to a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East region.

The PLO pointed out that the decision to cancel the law banning Israelis from contacting the PLO constitutes a new opportunity for the peace process, and renewed the call to hold a meeting between Palestinian officials and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres to prepare for a summit between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. This came in a telephone contact which Moroccan radio had with the Palestinian president's political adviser, Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif, who at the beginning talked about the PLO's opinion of the Israeli parliament's decision to cancel the banning of Israelis from contacting PLO members.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Sharif] The Israeli decision is a correction of an error committed by Yitzhaq Shamir and Yitzhaq Shamir's government, but in itself it constitutes a new opportunity for opening a new page in the peace process which concentrates on discussing the main issues, and the implementation of UN resolutions in connection with the termination of the Israeli occupation.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif, there are contradictions in the Israeli stand, contradictions between refusing to allow the Palestinian deportees back home and the cancellation of the ban on contacting high-ranking PLO officials.

[Abu-Sharif] The Israeli decision has come after lengthy consultations and investigation between the Knesset members, and is not recent. This matter was one of the points in the programs of many political forces which allied themselves with the Labor Party to form the new Israeli government after the recent elections. But I would like to say that the deportees' return to their homes is a basic issue which cannot be relinquished. We are hopeful that Mr. Rabin will take another positive step toward rectifying another error committed by him, that is, deporting the 415 Palestinians. Specifically, at this time the UN envoy is attempting to convince the Israeli Government to implement the UN Security Council resolution. This is another matter. However, I believe that Clinton's entry to the White House today provides a new opportunity for pushing the peace process forward and convincing the Israeli Government to adhere to UN resolutions. Yesterday evening, President Clinton affirmed that the implementation of UN resolutions is a basic and necessary issue, nonimplementation cannot be tolerated. We hope that President Clinton will start his work in the White House by insisting on implementation of the international legitimacy resolutions, not only in the Gulf but also in the Arab land, more specifically in Palestine.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif. [end recording]

PNC Secretary Praises Decision

NC2001121093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1104 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (MENA)—Muhammad Subayh, secretary general of the Palestine National Council [PNC], has welcomed the Israeli Knesset decision to lift the ban on contacts with the PLO.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Subayh said the decision represents a positive step and rectifies an old, fatal mistake committed by Yitzhaq Shamir's government to mar the peace climate and shut the door on any peaceful negotiations in the Middle East.

Subayh remarked that the decision should be followed by further steps represented in meetings of high-level officials from the two sides to serve the peace cause.

He said he admired all the brave Israelis who defied the ban on contacts with the PLO and were questioned and imprisoned for it.

PLO Bonn Envoy Welcomes Decision

LD2001142793 Hamburg DPA in German 1300 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Bonn (DPA)—'Abdallah Franji, spokesman for the PLO in Bonn, today welcomed the decision by the Israeli parliament to lift the ban on contact with the PLO. "The Knesset has thus not only taken into account the real situation, but has also set a new direction," Franji said in an interview with DPA. "This allows direct dialogue, and offers us the chance to shape the future of the Israelis and Palestinians together, independent of observers such as the U.S., the EC, or other mediators who mostly act in their own interests."

However, other steps have to take place beforehand, particularly a "positive reaction" to the demand for the repatriation of the more than 400 Palestinians who have been deported to South Lebanon. "If that does not happen, this decision has little purpose," Franji said. In the opinion of the PLO diplomat, the conviction has in the meantime been accepted in Israel "that peace talks will only bear fruit if negotiations are carried out directly with the PLO leadership."

According to Franji, the PLO expects "certain shifts and new accents" in Middle East policy from the new U.S. President, Bill Clinton. U.S. interests in the region remain basically the same. "And yet the new dynamic strength of Clinton and his program give the impression that the chances for direct contact with Washington have improved."

Franji thinks it possible that the Knesset decision could also encourage Bonn to finally talk openly and directly with the PLO. "Up to now, people have only talked to us on the quiet, and during his recent visit to Tunis Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel did not exploit the opportunity for talks with the PLO," he said.

Palestinian Leaders' Reactions

JN2001181293 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Yesterday, the Israeli Knesset canceled, by a big majority, the law banning Israelis from holding contacts with anti-Israeli organizations provided the security of the Hebrew state is not harmed.

The Knesset approved, by a vote of 39 to 20, the draft law tabled by the Rabin government amending the 1986 antiterrorist law. In a recent poll, more than 40 percent of the 120 Knesset members supported negotiations with the PLO.

We begin the Palestinian reactions with [PLO Executive Committee Member] Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, who answered a question by Ahmad Birru.

[Begin recording] [Birru] Will the Israeli Knesset decision open the door for holding contacts with the PLO despite the Israeli authorities assertion that the decision will not change Israel's policy toward the PLO?

['Abd-Rabbuh] In fact we consider this decision to be a useless step if it is not followed by tangible measures by the Israeli Government for direct negotiations with the PLO leadership and for serious dealing with the peace process in accordance with international legitimate resolutions, especially Security Council Resolution 242. At this stage, any judgment on the positive nature of this decision is defined by the practical policy of the Israeli government toward the continuation of the peace process and its link with a solution to the deportees issue in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No 799.

The successive Israeli governments have always adopted official and formal steps to give an impression of positive attitude. However, in reality and practice, issues always took an exactly opposite direction. At present, we believe that this step could be just a means of throwing dust into the eyes, an attempt to divert the attention of the local and international public opinions following the large-scale denunciation of the Rabin government following the deportation decision. Issues are contingent on the next Rabin step in terms of a practical application of this decision.

Moreover, we believe that in light of this decision, the new U.S. Administration can give a strong push to the peace process by restoring official dialogue with the PLO leadership, now that all justifications for suspending this dialogue have been removed. The Israeli Knesset decision is a signal to the new U.S. Administration so it can take a right step in this direction. [end recording]

In another Palestinian reaction, 'Arafat's political adviser Bassam Abu Sharif said that the Israeli decision is a new opportunity for the peace process and added that the Israeli Knesset decision opens the door for a serious Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. Abu-Sharif renewed his call for Shim'on Peres to meet with PLO officials any place he chooses to arrange for a summit between 'Arafat and Rabin.

For her part, [Palestinian peace delegation spokeswoman] Hanan 'Ashrawi said that the decision constitutes an important initiative in the right direction and must lead to direct dialogue with the PLO. However, 'Ashrawi said that the continuation of the peace process is linked with the return of the Palestinian deportees.

Palestinian Delegate Reacts

TA2001192393 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Interview with Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, by Yoni Ben-Menahem; place not given, on 20 January—recorded]

[Text] [Ben-Menahem] Mr. Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, do you think that this step will advance the peace process?

[Abu-Zayyad] I believe that this is a positive step, but the peace process will be advanced by two things. First, direct talks between the PLO and Israel. Second, a change in the Israeli concept of the aims of a settlement. If Israel does not change its concept of a political settlement with the Palestinian people, even if it talks with the PLO, this will not represent progress in the political process. Talks with the PLO in itself is not the objective, rather it is a means that might speed up and activate the political process. This will happen if a change occurs in the Israeli concept and thinking, namely, what does Israel seek from a political settlement with the Palestinian people and how does it see the future of a political settlement?

Chief Negotiator Comments

TA2001203093 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Interview with Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, and delegation member Furayh Abu-Middyan; by Yoram Kohen and Shlomi Eldar; place not given, on 20 January—recorded in Arabic with Hebrew subtitles]

[Excerpt] [Kohen] Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi, what is your view on the decision adopted yesterday by the Knesset, which permits meetings with the PLO?

['Abd-al-Shafi] It is a good but late decision. In any event, we welcome this decision and hope that it will be the beginning of a practical and serious Israeli position toward achieving a just peace that enables the two peoples to coexist in the region.

[Abu-Middyan] The law itself was stillborn. Now a big and respected funeral is being held for it. When the law was imposed by Mr. Shamir and ratified by the Knesset, it had no value and was a dead law. The meetings did not stop even under this law, but now the openness is important and exists. I remember that Mr. Yosi Beilin was in Rome and wanted to talk with Bassam Abu-Sharif, the PLO's representative, but he wavered. He talked with him and didn't talk with him, whereas he knows that all Palestinians are committed to the PLO one way or another. The PLO is the Palestinian people's representative. There are direct contacts and they are aware of them. There are constant meetings and this is known. The Israeli intelligence service is one of the best in the region and it knows. Why should there not be talks with the correct address of the Palestinian people? Why should they talk with me or others? Why should there not be direct talk with Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] or the PLO? This is the shortest way. The negotiating delegation today is like a fax machine. It receives a message from Abu-'Ammar and delivers it to Mr. Rubinstein. The rules of the game must be changed so that we may be able to achieve something. [passage omitted]

DFLP Leader Reacts

JN2001214793 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Telephone interview with Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], by reporter Nabil Sabbagh on 20 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Hawatimah] The Israeli Knesset decision to lift the ban on contacts with the PLO is a step in the right direction. The Knesset must complete this step toward direct talks with the PLO. The PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and lifting the ban on contacts with it is an implied recognition of this because no step in the direction of comprehensive, balanced peace can succeed in the Middle East without recognizing the Palestinian people's unity, that the PLO is their sole legitimate representative. [passage omitted]

[Sabbagh] Brother Nayif, I would like to use this telephone interview to ask you about the issue of the deportees who have been in southern Lebanon for a whole month. Is there a way to force Israel to implement Resolution No. 799?

[Hawatimah] We clearly say that Resolution 799 stipulates the immediate return of the deportees in one batch. Resolutions are being applied against Iraq and Libya, and the United States must use the same standards and push toward a new Security Council resolution which will be binding on Israel to immediately return the deportees in one batch as the resolution stipulates, otherwise Israel will have to face sanctions.

I tell you frankly that the DFLP has reliable information that attempts are being made among the U.S. Administration, Egypt, and Tel Aviv to break and circumvent Resolution 799. A timetable has been drawn to return the deportees in groups within 24 months ending after 24 months, thus succumbing to the Rabin government decision to deport the Palestinian temporarily for two years. [passage omitted]

PLO's 'Abbas on Israeli Decision

JN2101103693 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0745 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Manama, 21 Jan (WAKH)—Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, member of the PLO Executive Committee, has said that the Israeli Knesset's decision to cancel a law banning contacts with the PLO is a reasonable step. However, he noted that through this step, Israel may be trying to draw attention away from the problem of Palestinian deportees.

In a statement published in the Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM today, Abu-Mazin said that the Israeli Knesset's decision rectifies a serious mistake by the government of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, even if the Israeli Government still bans political dialogue with the PLO.

He noted that the Israeli Government's next step should be to recognize the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to begin direct dialogue with it.

Responding to a question on the timing of the Israeli decision, Abu-Mazin said that with this decision, the Israelis may be trying to draw attention away from the deportation act— something of which we are aware and, inasmuch as we consider the cancellation of this law as a cancellation of a racist step, we would also consider the cancellation of the deportation decision as a cancellation of an inhuman step.

Abu-Mazin added: We still adhere to the need to implement Resolution 799 and we are fully occupied with pressuring Israel into returning the deportees. Answering a question on whether he expects a similar step by the United States toward the PLO, Abu-Mazin said that the U.S. Government should follow the same policy, especially since it decided to suspend dialogue with the PLO to placate Israel. As long as Israel has legitimized contact with the PLO, the U.S. Administration would do better to restore dialogue with the PLO since it would serve the U.S.-sponsored peace process.

Responding to a question on reports about U.S. pressure on Israel to return the deportees, Abu-Mazin said that this is a new step in the dawn of President Clinton's era and it displays good intentions.

Chief Negotiator Condemns Allied Bombing of Iraq

TA2001193993 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 20 Jan 93 pp 1, 11

[report by Munir Abu-Rizq]

[Text] Gaza—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, has condemned the bombardment to which Iraqi territory is being subjected by forces of the Atlantic alliance.

'Abd-al-Shafi described the allies' bombing of Iraq as a kind of contentiousness, especially in light of the double standard in which the United States deals with UN Security Council resolutions.

In a statement to AL-FAJR, 'Abd-al-Shafi noted that the Palestinian delegation will hold an important meeting within days against the background of the new aggression against Iraq and the deportees issue. He expressed his belief that the Palestinians' slim remaining faith in the negotiations and the United Nations will diminish and collapse in the face of the disrespect by the great powers, particularly the United States, for UN Security Council resolutions regarding the Palestinian problem and the deportees.

Al-Husayni Stand on Deportees, Talks Resumption

TA1901172593 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 18 Jan 93 p 12

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation's steering committee, reaffirmed the link between the Israeli decision to deport more than 400 Palestinians and the resumption of the peace talks. Addressing Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, al-Husayni said: If the deportation problem is not resolved and the relevant UN resolution is not implemented, you will not find a Palestinian negotiator in front of you.

Al-Husayni was speaking at a massive popular rally organized by the al-Shabibah student movement at Bi'r Zayt University to mark Fatah's 28th anniversary.

The head of the steering committee to the Palestinian delegation added: We do not proceed from emotional positions or political haggling. We cannot go to the negotiating table while the deportees are in these conditions, because if we go and they are still outside their homeland, Rubinstein, the head of the Israeli delegation, will tell the Palestinian negotiator: This is our plan, accept it since you have no other option. We expelled hundreds of Palestinians and the world protested, but this did not help you.

Al-Husayni said: We cannot put the Palestinian negotiator in such a position. If he goes he will go with strength. Al-Husayni called on the international community to find a means for salvaging the talks after the Israeli Government had dealt it a fatal blow by the deportation decision.

Egyptian Minister Delivers Proposals on Deportees

TA1901165893 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 18 Jan 93 p 1

[Text] Within the framework of the intensive Egyptian efforts to return the deportees, [Egyptian] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa paid a short visit to Israel during which he met with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and delivered to Rabin an important message from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak.

AL-MANAR has learned that the Egyptian minister carried three proposals on the issue of the deportees. The commitment to each of those proposals would result in the resumption of the negotiating process. Political circles say that 'Amr Musa warned against a halt in the peace process and asserted that Egypt rejects the deportation decision. He stressed that concern for the peace process requires Israel to back down from the deportation decision and noted that there are several proposals from which Israel can choose so that the negotiations may be resumed. 'Amr Musa emphasized the need to achieve practical progress in the upcoming round that will contribute to calming the situation and prevent it from exploding.

It has been learned that the proposals made to Israel were as follows:

1. To return the deportees within six months provided that Tel Aviv begins to return 100 deportees before the middle of next month.

2. The Israeli courts would issue a verdict annulling the deportation of the majority of deportees.

3. Accepting the deportees' appeals against their deportation and then beginning the deportees' return.

Butrus-Ghali Accused of 'Weakening' Deportee Issue

JN2001112193 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Jan 93 p 17

[Report by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has accused UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali of weakening the issue of Palestinian deportee.

In a special interview with AL-RA'Y one month after the deportation of 415 Palestinians from their homeland to Lebanon, the official Hamas Spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah said that Dr. Ghali tried to obstruct UN Security

Council moves to take serious steps and to impose sanctions on the Zionist entity.

He added that the UN secretary general will try, for the third time, to send a UN envoy although he knows very well that this will be useless as Israel turned its back on his first and second envoys.

The official spokesman for Hamas expected the new U.S. administration to send a special envoy to the region in the next few days.

Ghawshah emphasized that the deportees know no other road but the road to their homeland, Palestine, and that they reject settlement in any country in this world.

He said: We reject Rabin's attempts to circumvent the issue of the deportees by mobilizing some humanitarian activities, such as the Red Cross, or returning nine deportees, and then returning another six deportees. Moreover, we reject information saying that Rabin's government presented many proposals, including an attempt to consider the return of those who were deported before the intifadah—in a step to move the issue of the deportees and to make some secondary concession.

Ghawshah warned the Palestinian and Arab parties, who are following the issue of the deportees, against the dangers of such Israeli attempts which aim at weakening the issue and at scoring with moves that are just for show and that lack seriousness.

He added: The Hamas movement emphasizes the political dimension of the issue of the deportees who represent the first group within the transfer plan. The Hamas movement also emphasizes the humanitarian dimension of the deportees issue which should be utilized to mobilize world public opinion to exert continuous pressure on Rabin, who committed a big and uncalculated mistake, in order to make him pay the price.

On the upcoming meeting between Hamas and Fatah, Ghawashah expects the follow-up committee to hold its meeting in Khartoum within the next three days.

He noted that the follow-up committee is made up of five members, with two from Fatah, two from Hamas, and one from the Islamic Arab Popular Conference.

Concluding his statements to AL-RA'Y, Ghawshah hoped that the content of the joint Hamas-Fatah statement would be implemented, especially in terms of important issues that can promote the march of the Palestinian people. This includes forming and activating committees which were agreed upon in the joint statement; activating the coordination committee inside the occupied territories; advancing toward the establishment of a joint leadership inside the occupied territories for all the Palestinian Islamic and national forces; and implementing other resolutions in the joint statement, foremost of which is adopting the charters of honor inside the occupied territories, stopping direct and indirect media campaigns, and solving all the hot issues between Fatah and Hamas.

UN Envoy Meets With Delegates on Deportees

TA2101104493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Following a meeting with representatives of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, UN envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan said that the meeting dealt with possibilities for returning the deportees. According to him, the deportees' living conditions in Marj al-Zuhur were not discussed. I do not deal with humanitarian issues, Gharekhan said; I came to ensure that Israel implements UN Resolution 779 [as heard].

Ziyad Abu-Zayyad and Hanan 'Ashrawi said after the meeting that as long as Israel does not implement the resolution by returning the deportees, the peace process will make no progress and no date for another round will be set.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that after the meeting, five buses carrying relatives of the deportees and Palestinian delegation representatives departed for northern Israel, where they plan to stage a protest near the Rosh Haniqra border crossing point.

'Ashrawi: Talks at 'Complete Halt'

TA2101115993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Excerpts] UN envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan will meet this evening in Tel Aviv with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin for further talks on the state of the Palestinian deportees. This morning the envoy met with Palestinian leaders in East Jerusalem. Mark Weiss reports:

[Begin recording] [Weiss] About 100 relatives of the deportees greeted the UN envoy as he arrived at Orient House in East Jerusalem for talks with the Palestinian leaders. They chanted slogans demanding an immediate return of the men. Later, they set off in buses for Rosh Haniqra on the Lebanese border, where they hope to be able to pass on clothes to be sent to the deportee camp. [passage omitted]

The meeting between Chinmaya Gharekhan and the Palestinians lasted less than an hour. Once again, the UN envoy stressed the talks focused on bringing the men home and not on other matters, such as humanitarian aid:

[Gharekhan] Yes, I have something to say to Mr. Rabin following this visit which I will convey and which I cannot tell you, obviously.

[Weiss] I asked the UN envoy if an Israeli decision to move the deportees to the south Lebanese security zone would be a step forward.

[Gharekhan] We are right now discussing the implementation of 799, that's all.

[Weiss] Palestinian spokeswoman Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi summed up the meeting for the Palestinians.

['Ashrawi] Well, we did not suggest anything new and out of the ordinary. Everything we talked about has to do with implementation of 799 immediately and its relations to the peace process, to the political structure, to the political scene in the occupied territories, and, of course, to the legitimacy and credibility of the international community as far as the Palestinians are concerned, as far as the whole Arab world is concerned, especially in view of the blatant disequilibrium and double standard.

[Weiss] And as long as the deportees are not returned, the Palestinians will stay away from the peace talks?

['Ashrawi] So long as the deportees are not returned there is no peace talk, there is no process, and there is no negotiating done as far as we are concerned. There are several prerequisites, several basic requirements that have to be carried out, foremost among which is the return of the deportees. We did not withdraw from the peace talks; the peace talks have come to a complete halt as a result of the Israeli action.

[Weiss] 'Ashrawi denied new media reports that the Palestinians may be willing to consider an end to violence in the territories if the deportees are repatriated. [end recording]

Delegation Makes Recommendations to Leadership

TA1901164093 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 19 Jan 93 pp 1, 15

[Text] AL-QUDS has learned that the Palestinian delegation held an important meeting three days ago at its headquarters, the Orient House in Jerusalem.

The delegation decided to send an urgent recommendation to the Palestinian leadership about the deportees crisis and its link with the issue of the peace talks with the Israelis.

According to a responsible Palestinian source, the delegation's recommendation to the Palestinian leadership was as follows:

—To dispatch a limited number of delegation members to Washington a few days after President Clinton's assumption of his post in order to meet with the new administration's team and discuss with it the issue of the Palestinian deportees. The delegation members will brief the new team about the extreme Palestinian indignation at the deportation step and its impact on the negotiating process, and will explain the Palestinian viewpoint on the autonomy plan presented by the Israelis to the Palestinian delegation at the end of the eighth round of negotiations. This plan divides Palestinian land and authority and gives to settlers powers equal to those of the Palestinians.

The source said the recommendation calls on the Palestinian leadership to pursue a specific strategy on the negotiations without committing itself to a firm decision, in order to preserve for itself enough room for maneuver and political action.

The source noted that the delegation's message to the Palestinian leadership explained that the delegation members who will presumably meet with the new administration's team following Clinton's assumption of the presidency will inform U.S. officials of two basic demands:

1. To arrange the deportees' return through Israel's acceptance of Security Council Resolution 799 and the principle of returning the deportees within a phased timetable.

2. To ask the Clinton administration to exert real pressure on Rabin's government to induce it to adopt realistic and practical positions at the negotiations, which will harm neither the foundations of the peace process nor the spirit of the U.S. invitation to the Madrid conference.

Informed Palestinian sources in Tunis have disclosed that the message which Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation steering committee, handed over several days ago to the U.S. consul general in Jerusalem contains the official Palestinian stance regarding participation in the upcoming round of peace talks—namely, the suspension of this participation until the problem of the deportees is resolved and all of them are returned to their homes.

It was understood from the discussion held between Faysal al- Husayni and the delegation that accompanied him and the U.S. consul general that the resolution of the issue of the deportees means that Israel will agree to return all of the deportees and that this could be done through a phased return. However, an international guarantee must be issued either by the Security Council or the United States according to which Israel will commit itself to return all the deportees according to a timetable.

Those sources say this Palestinian stance was formulated following consultations held with the various Palestinian forces, including Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and after the Israeli Government rejected the international efforts represented in the endeavors by the UN secretary general's two envoys and some European countries, such as France, and in the wake of the failure of Egyptian efforts in particular, which sought the return of all the deportees.

Report Called 'Not Accurate'

TA2001154693 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Jan 93 p 2

[Text] Commenting on yesterday's report in AL-QUDS, Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, official spokesman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, said that what was published "was not accurate," and explained the following:

First: There is constant and direct contact between the Palestinian delegation and the Palestinian leadership and there has been no specific recommendation by the delegation.

Second: The Palestinian leadership has for some time adopted a Palestinian decision to activate the dialogue with the new U.S. Administration and to delegate an individual or individuals to conduct this dialogue—not necessarily from the Palestinian delegation—on the Palestinian position regarding the deportation issue, human rights violations, and the obstacles that confront the negotiating process.

Third: The Palestinian delegation did not present any recommendation about a specific strategy regarding the negotiations, as was reported. Moreover, no change has occurred in the Palestinian position declared by the PLO, as published in the official spokesman's statement last week.

Fourth: Bilateral Palestinian-U.S. relations are subject to the decision and review of the PLO's political leadership. It will delegate whomever it deems fit and not necessarily someone from the delegation.

Fifth: There is a continuous review of and dialogue over the arrangement of Palestinian-U.S. meetings. An announcement was made at the time about a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. The letter contained Palestinian positions and demands on the need to return the Palestinian deportees and examine the flaws in the peace process which have led to its collapse.

It should be stressed that the Palestinian delegation's stance always adheres to the official Palestinian position, which insists on implementing Security Council Resolution 799 regarding the deportees and their immediate return, on obligating Israel to implement the Fourth Geneva Convention in the occupied territories, and on stopping all human rights violations. This position also considers that before "the mortal blow," represented in deportation, the peace process had already reached a dead end as a result of Israeli intransigence; the Israeli side's refusal to abide by the terms of reference, foundations, and aims of the peace process; the absence of an active role by the sponsoring countries; and an ineffective general framework for conducting the peace process, including the terms of Palestinian participation.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi affirmed yesterday that in accordance with an official PLO decision, contacts have been held for some time now with the U.S. Administration to dispatch one individual or a small delegation to Washington to explain the official Palestinian position on the peace talks and the deportees issue.

Dr. 'Ashrawi also affirmed that this delegation, which is supposed to meet with the administration of new U.S. President Bill Clinton, who is take over his post today, "will discuss the deportation issue, human rights, and the flaws in the peace process."

Fatah Council Links Talks to Deportees

PM2001095693 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Jan 93 p4

[Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi report: "Fatah Links Resumption of Negotiations to Repatriation of Deportees"]

[Text] Tunis—Fatah's Revolutionary Council concluded its meetings early yesterday morning in Tunis. The meetings were attended by 100 members including the Central Committee members.

Contrary to all expectations, the Revolutionary Council, considered to be the link between the General Congress and the Central Committee, reached almost complete agreement on the most prominent issues raised, particularly the issues of the negotiations, the deportees, consolidation of the intifadah in the occupied territory, and national unity.

In a telephone statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, 'Abbas Zaki, Fatah's official in charge of foreign relations, confirmed that the council had decided to link the resumption of the peace negotiations to the deportees issue. He said that there would be no Palestinian participation in the negotiations without Israeli commitment to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 799 (on repatriation of the Palestinian deportees to their homes and homeland.) He also stressed that "there can be no negotiations against a background of deportation nor under the unfair terms of the Madrid conference."

Mahir Ghunaym, Fatah's official in charge of mobilization and organization, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the return of the Palestinian deportees to their homes was a main and fundamental condition for the resumption of the negotiations but the Madrid arbitrary terms must also be reconsidered, "particularly after the new changes in the United States and Israel and at international and Arab levels, as Arab solidarity begins to show some signs of revival."

The Revolutionary Council adopted a number of measures to meet the requirements of the new year and cope with Israel's most violent campaign against the Palestinian people. The council formed committees to follow up all organizational, administrative, and political issues as well as issues of the struggle in the occupied territory. In his remarks at the Palestinian Revolutionary Council meeting, 'Arafat said that Rabin's government was following the same policy as the Shamir government, of intransigence, racism, and nonresponse to the peace process. He held the United States responsible for that because it did not put pressure on Israel. 'Arafat talked about two other important issues. The first was the question of national unity and specifically "relations between Fatah and Hamas." He said: "We reached agreement with the Hamas brothers in Khartoum but in the final hours they came under foreign pressure as a result of which the signing of the agreement was postponed." According to some people close to 'Arafat, he was apparently referring to Iran.

The second issue was 'Arafat's mediation between Egypt and Sudan over the question of Hala'ib. He said that if a war broke out between the two countries because of that dispute, the consequences would be as bad for the Arab nation as the consequences of the Gulf war.

PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin) hailed the results of his Gulf tour which, he said, made it possible to reorganize the 5 percent tax paid by the Palestinians [to the PLO]. He said that he expected the official Gulf aid for the PLO to be resumed soon.

It had been reported that there was an argument within the Revolutionary Council regarding the apology made by Abu-Mazin during the tour for the position taken by the PLO on the Gulf war, but a prominent Palestinian official who attended the Revolutionary Council meetings has emphasized to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that there was no negative argument within the council about Abu-Mazin's tour and that there was an understanding of what took place during that tour as well as appreciation of the Gulf states' general position on the Palestinian question, both at the political level and as regards aid.

That official, who wished to remain anonymous, said that the Revolutionary Council valued the positions of the Gulf states on the Palestinian question.

'Arafat Adviser Sha'th on Peace Process

PM2001164593 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 16/17 Jan 93 p 4

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, "Fatah Central Committee member and political adviser to Palestine President Yasir 'Arafat," by Hasanayn Karum in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Fatah Central Committee member and political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has said that Israel must return the Palestinian deportees to their home before the bilateral negotiations with Israel can resume.

In an interview with AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI Dr. Sha'th said, "we will not backtrack on the peace negotiations, but Security Council Resolution 799 on the deportees' return must be implemented." Dr. Sha'th began his interview by talking about the Palestinian moves to end the deportees crisis: The deportees battle is still continuing and escalating, and we are recruiting all our struggle capabilities on the ground and our political capabilities to confront Israel and force it to return the deportees to their homeland and homes. The Palestinian people see the deportation as eradicating Palestinian roots from the Palestinian homeland. It is a "Palestinian Holocaust." [passage omitted]

[Sha'th] Our position continued to be clear on the need to end the deportation immediately or to step up action to impose international military and economic sanctions against Israel.

This is why the demand for implementing Chapter VII of the UN Charter received new support at both the Arab and international levels. This support emerged for the first time in the resolutions adopted by the Arab foreign ministers in Cairo and the Islamic resolutions adopted in Dakar.

The clear U.S. hesitation, which was clear in the U.S. promise to Israel to use the veto against applying Chapter VII to it, and the U.S. hope that a solution would be achieved without the need to implement Chapter VII, results from the success of our campaign against the deportation on the one hand and the U.S. persistence in using Chapter VII against Iraq, Libya, and Somalia on the other. The campaign against the deportation succeeded in highlighting the immoral contradiction in the U.S. position, which compels the Security Council to always use double standards against the Arabs and in Israel's favor.

And we must step up this position and the determination to implement Chapter VII in every Arab or international sphere.

[Karum] But do you not believe that your refusal to participate in the next round of negotiations before the deportees' return and Israel's rejection of this could harm the achievements realized in your favor in the U.S. position? This is in the knowledge that there are millions of Palestinians who are still outside their country and you did not insist on their return!

[Sha'th] We are engaged in two battles at the same time: the battle to return the 400 deportees and the battle to return the 4 million deportees. They are two battles in which we should engage at the same time. But at present the priority is being given to the new deportees battle, since their issue is urgent and in the world's eyes seems burning and convincing from all aspects; and there is a new Security Council resolution on it and effective support for this resolution. [passage omitted]

Participating in the next round of negotiations now and before Israel's compliance with the Security Council resolution would mean allowing it to exploit the peace process to justify the deportation crime. It would also mean changing the rules of the peace process—which we would not accept at all.

But at the same time we are not responsible for the suspension of the negotiations. The one responsible is Israel alone and its deportation crime, and it must return the deportees so that we can return to the negotiating table.

The continuation of the peace process will then return us to political struggle to return all the deportees from our people's sons to their homeland and to establish an independent state. We entered this peace process on the basis of a decision from the Palestine National Council [PNC] based on a complete analysis of international political conditions and our people's needs.

We decided at the time that negotiation represented an additional means of struggle against our enemy alongside the intifadah and all forms of struggle against the occupation. And this process cannot be completely abandoned except by a decision from the PNC after deliberate consideration of all conditions and probabilities. Thus we are suspending participation until the deportees' return. And we will not abandon the negotiation process as a whole except if the PNC issues a decision for us to do so. But our battle against the deportation should continue by all means, including escalation of the intifadah, action at the UN level, and Arab and international moves in all arenas.

[Karum] The Israelis might say: If we submit to this Palestinian condition, it could encourage them to impose new conditions when they return to the negotiations. Will you actually have new conditions other than the deportees' return?

[Sha'th] The negotiation process nearly reached an impasse before Israel committed the deportation crime. And perhaps Rabin thought that the deportation operation would confuse the Palestinian people and their leadership, divert attention from the main political process, and even enable Israel to change the political process' conditions so as to be against the Palestinian people's interests. But what actually happened is that the Palestinian people's rejection of the deportation operation, the PLO's swift move to confront it, and the deportees' resoluteness and willingness to suffer the harshest of conditions in Marj al-Zuhur—all this led to a coup against all that Rabin had planned for. This is because the Palestinian people are now more united. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] went to Tunis to hold a dialogue with the PLO. It also met with Fatah in Khartoum. And the PLO is on the road to Palestinian unification, and the world as a whole is standing in the face of Israel.

Thus if the deportation operation ends with the deportees' return, what is required is to correct the course of the peace process in order to get out of the impasse into which the Israeli negotiation policy has led it. This requires three major conditions:

1. The Russian and U.S. co-sponsors should adopt a firm and clear position in the face of Israeli intransigence and reject Israeli-submitted plans violating the peace process' conditions and authority represented in the letter of invitation and the letter of assurances. No neutral position can be accepted from the U.S. co-sponsor toward Israel's attempt to exclude Jerusalem, perpetuate settlement, and partition Palestinian territory into numerous provinces, since all this openly violates Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the Palestinian people's full political rights, and the land-for-peace principle. The Palestinian people will not accept less than the plan which the PLO presented at the negotiating table, which stipulates that all economic, legislative, and judicial powers over land and inhabitants in all the territory occupied in 1967, first and foremost Jerusalem, be transferred to the provisional Palestinian government which will work to prepare the occupied land within a short period of time for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

2. The Palestinian representation farce and riddle invented by Shamir and supported by the U.S. Administration must be brought to an end. This farce began to collapse before the deportation operation with the participation of diaspora Palestinians in the multilateral negotiations, the PLO's open leadership of the negotiation process, and the emergence of an independent Palestinian delegation in the bilateral negotiations. So in the next rounds the PLO must form a comprehensive delegation from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including from Jerusalem and the diaspora, led openly and directly at and beyond the negotiating table by official leaders from the PLO. And official dialogue between the PLO and the United States must be resumed at the highest levels.

3. Israel's violations of the fourth Geneva convention and Palestinian human rights must be ended, and real protection must be provided for the Palestinian people until the occupation ends. If this had been done in the past, the deportation crime threatening the entire political process would not have occurred and completely obstructed it, even for a while. Commitment to implementing the fourth Geneva convention means an immediate and complete halt to all settlement operations, including in occupied Jerusalem. It also means a halt to arrests, repression, collective punishment, demolition of homes, and torture of citizens.

It also means ending the Israeli execution squads—al-musta'ribin [those pretending to be Arabs] units—and bringing those in charge of them to trial.

And it necessarily means a complete halt to all deportation operations. Commitment to these three conditions after the deportees' return would provide the conditions for the political process' success and continuation. But that also requires that the intifadah be continued and escalated and that further Arab unity be achieved in order to use Arab capabilities in the interests of the Palestinian and Arab negotiator and to end the economic siege around the occupied Palestinian territory, thus providing tools for bolstering Palestinian steadfastness until the occupation is repelled.

'Arafat Adviser on Deportees, Contact With Clinton

NC1901212693 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 14 Jan 93 pp 2, 3, 7

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, conducted by Muhammad Abu-al-Hadid, Jalal al-Sayyid, Umaymah Abu-al-Nasr, Badawi Mahmud, Riyad Sayf-al-Nasr, Ahmad al-Bardisi, Sumayyah Ahmad, Yusri al-Sayyid, Salwa Muhyi-al- Din, and moderated by Mahfuz al-Ansari; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] [Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq] Rabin has proposed to take back the deportees in exchange for halting the intifadah. Doesn't this signal use of the deportees as a bargaining chip?

[Sha'th] Rabin presented the proposal in many forms; first by saying that there was a mistake regarding the deportees' names, and then by saying that they would be returned in three months to two years, and so forth.

[Correspondent] Is this a tactic, or just confusion?

[Sha'th] Israel has found itself in an unexpected situation that favors the deportees. What Rabin sold to his left in favor of his right turned against Rabin himself. We are bound to expect a rift between Rabin and [Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on] Peres, and we can see this in Peres' statement that Rabin [did not] consult him before making the deportation decision. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] If the Palestinians were invited to resume the peace negotiations in light of a partial solution to the deportees issue, what would you do?

[Sha'th] We never said that we have terminated the peace process, nor have we withdrawn from it. All we say is that we can not determine a new stand on the negotiations process before the deportees have returned. We engaged in the negotiations for the return of the Palestinians and for a just solution to the Palestinian issue, not to expel the Palestinians. We cannot allow Israel to use the peace process as a cover for further violations.

[Correspondent] Some call for a halt to all negotiations and others call for halting only the multilateral talks on the grounds that these talks give to Israel but do not take from it.

[Sha'th] Suspending the talks is not contingent on the strategic feasibility of the negotiations, because that is clear; rather, the suspension is linked to the new situation created by the deportees issue. We will not allow Israel to do anything it wants and let it go on as if nothing has happened on the pretext that we are clinging to the negotiations. Negotiating is a means, not an end in itself. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] When did the Palestinians contact Clinton?

[Sha'th] The contact was not direct. President-elect Clinton completely refused to meet with any foreign visitors except Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin—on U.S. aid to Israel—and Mexican Prime Minister Salinas [title as received]. I confirm that he refused direct contact and also opposed the Arab community playing any role in the elections until Jim Zugby, who is of Lebanese origin, managed to enter the elections camp through mediation by a Jewish American.

If there has been any contact or relations between the Palestinians and President-elect Clinton, they have taken place through his grandfathers and grandsons; that is to say through meetings with Fullbright and McGovern and through the liberals, the closest of whom was Jesse Jackson. However, they are indirect relations. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Were contacts held between you after Clinton won the elections?

[Sha'th] Yes, we contacted him, but he said that President Bush was the President of the United States until 20 January. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] What about Palestinian-Gulf relations? Is there reconciliation?

[Sha'th] There are the beginnings of Palestinian-Gulf reconciliation, in which [PLO official] Abu-Mazin played a major role. He also visited Qatar and Oman. There also are relations between the ambassadors, contact and weekly meetings with the Saudi ambassador in Tunis, contact with the Saudi delegations to the multilateral talks, and there is coordination between them and the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Commentary: No Regrets Over Bush Departure

JN2001214193 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1833 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Today, a young Democrat, U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton will be inaugurated as the 42d U.S. President, succeeding Republican President George Bush. He will become the new occupant of the White House and the President of the world's strongest and greatest country. Undoubtedly, Clinton will have a heavy legacy to tackle, left by former President George Bush, who weakened the U.S. economy, allowed unemployment to grow at a fast pace, allowed crime to spread, and consecrated the international role of the United States as the sole international policeman in this world.

When compared with previous U.S. Administrations, the administration of former U.S. President George Bush has been the staunchest supporter of Israel, in terms of its commitment to Israel. It was Bush who honored this commitment until the last day of his rule. History will recall that it was Bush who decided to launch the Gulf war, which was led by the United States, along with an international coalition comprising 31 states, against Iraq. Similarly, it was Bush who made the ill-fated decision of putting pressure on the Security Council to make it pass a resolution imposing an embargo against Iraq—a starvation and suffocation embargo which has continued since the start of the aggression. Immediately prior to his departure from the White House, Bush displayed a determination to keep his name among the vanguard of the Arab nation's enemies, whether by continuing his aggression on Iraq, or by extending support for Israel in all spheres.

When it pledged to sponsor the Middle East peace process, the former Bush administration encouraged Israel not to show commitment to the peace process on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy 242 and 338. Indeed, it refused to put pressures on Israel to make it implement Resolution 799, which provides for the repatriation of Palestinian deportees. The Bush administration will be known as the only U.S. Administration which used multiple standards in its handling of international conflicts.

At any rate, with the departure of George Bush today, we have no regrets over his black and ugly rule. Also today, Bill Clinton will assume the chief executive office in the United States. The new U.S. President Clinton affirmed his concern for continued U.S. sponsorship of the Middle East peace process when he decided to keep the U.S. State Department crew which is familiar with the details of the Arab-Israeli negotiations and the details of the peace process. Hence, President Clinton's administration has a lot to do to show a real concern to turn the peace process from mere continuous negotiations in which Israel refuses to succumb to international legitimacy into facts of life which would produce a lasting and just peace that would ensure the restoration of the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights as enshrined in international legitimacy, including their right to self-determination and their right to establish an independent state, with Jerusalem as its capital, under the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The PLO, along with the Arab states engaged in the peace process, have shown a commitment to the resolutions of international legitimacy. Will Israel do so? Furthermore, can the new President Bill Clinton force Israel to honor the resolutions of international legitimacy? Or will the administration of Bill Clinton be like the infamous former administration of George Bush? The next few days will provide us with an answer to this question.

'Arafat Reaffirms Willingness for Just Peace

JN2001210793 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1820 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, has affirmed that the Palestinians will continue to extend their hands for a just and comprehensive peace in the region—one that is based on the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar noted that the PLO rejects all capitulatory solutions which would confer legitimacy on the Israeli occupation of Palestine, the capital of which is holy Jerusalem. He added that the Palestinian people's intifadah against the occupation authorities will continue until the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

In a speech delivered at a celebration held in Tunis today by the ruling Democratic Constitutional Assembly to mark the 28th anniversary of the Palestinian revolution, brother President Abu-'Ammar explained the dangers inherent in the Rabin government's deportation of more than 400 Palestinian strugglers from their homeland. He also spoke on the repercussions of this move on the Middle East peace process. He affirmed the need to consolidate joint Arab action so that we may cope with the difficult circumstances being experienced by the Arab nation. He paid tribute to the Arab efforts embodied in the meetings of the Arab foreign ministers held recently in Cairo to discuss the issue of Palestinian deportees and its repercussions on the Middle East peace process.

'Arafat Urges Clinton To Respect Palestinian Rights

LD2001212093 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Brother President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] stressed that our Palestinian people's heroic intifadah will continue unabated to transform the land of Palestine to blazing volcanoes under the feet of the occupiers until an independent Palestinian state has been established and honorable Jerusalem made its capital.

This came in a speech delivered yesterday evening at a ceremony held by the Constititutional Democratic Rally, on the occasion of the 22nd anniversary [as received] of the outbreak of the Palestinian Revolution and on Martyrs Day, at the Conference Hall in the Tunisian capital. [passage omitted]

Brother Abu-'Ammar noted that Rabin, as defense minister, announced on his way from Washington in 1987, that once he was back in Israel, it would take him no more than two days to destroy the intifadah. However, reality proved him wrong. 'Arafat stressed: I defied him at the time from Sanaa and told him: you could not do that either in two days, weeks, months or years. And here it is, history is witnessing the most powerful uprising in modern times.

Brother Abu-'Ammar added that the Arab nation is currently going through difficult circumstances, similar to hard labor at childbirth, and that such circumstances were imposed by the new world order which tried to impose its harsh conditions on us. He pointed out that the World War II victors are today trying to slice the cake in the same way as they did after World War I. The manner in which Sykes-Picot [secret Anglo-French agreement in World War I] ended resembles the division at Yalta following World War II.

Brother Abu-'Ammar explained that what is happening now on the ground is what was agreed at Yalta after World War III [as heard], which means imposing influence on the Third World. He pointed out that, as far as Palestine was concerned, that influence consisted of transferring three million Jews from the Soviet Union, while land was not large enough for such a number. In that way, the new world order confirms the intention to revive Greater Israel as a power superior to all other Middle Eastern countries, which could be possible in a country extending from the Nile to the Euphrates on the lands of Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, half of Syria, two thirds of Iraq, one third of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and half of the Sinai, which is the map printed on the shekel, the Isreli currency. [passage omitted]

Brother Abu-'Ammar added that the Palestinian, Jordanian, Lebanese, and the Syrian delegations will not go to the coming round of negotiations in Washington, and that this stance was adopted as a result of the deportation of 413 Palestinians from their land, stressing in this context: Our hands are still extended for a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of the Palestinian initiative made in 1988 at our National Council which I declared in Geneva and consequently the American-Palestinian dialogue began in Tunis.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar stated that after the American-Palestinian dialogue was stopped, the Palestinian leadership maintained its contacts with President Bush's administration through various channels. President Bush promised us, through those channels, that his administration would resume the dialogue with us as soon as the American presidential elections ended. However, after the conclusion of those elections the administration informed us that it could not do that because it was preoccupied with the transition of power.

President Abu-'Ammar called on President Bill Clinton to respect the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Peace is not a Palestinian interest as much as it is an American, European, and international interest, he said. He added: We do not beg peace, it is either a just and comprehensive peace or no to occupation. Brother Abu-'Ammar stressed that the Bush administration made us go to Madrid on the basis of the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338. The American President also said then that the negotiations were being held on the basis of land for peace. [Passage omitted]

Hamas Denies Threatening Palestinian Envoys

NC2001203593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2015 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Amman, 20 Jan (MENA)—Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has denied reports that Hamas has made threats against Palestinian ambassadors in Europe.

In a statement to MENA, Ghawshah said these reports are completely baseless and added that Hamas is a struggle movement operating against the Israeli occupation, which is committing crimes against the Palestinian people.

Ghawshah said that the Israeli radio report citing a French newspaper is part of the vicious campaign being launched by the occupation authorities against Hamas. It is an exposed campaign aimed at sowing sedition between Hamas and the PLO, Ghawshah added.

Abu-Nidal Said Behind Threats

TA2101110593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] The precautionary measures taken by PLO representatives in Europe were the result of death threats issued by the Abu-Nidal organization and not by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. This was stated by journalist Uri Avneri following conversations he held with Yasir 'Arafat's advisers.

He was told that the PLO learned that Abu-Nidal's organization had dispatched teams of assassins after Fatah captured dozens of that organization's members in south Lebanon.

Our Arab affairs correspondent Arye Gus notes that it was reported yesterday that Ibrahim al-Sus and his family left Paris under heavy protection by French security forces. In recent months, over 20 people were assassinated in internal fighting between Fatah and Abu-Nidal's organization in Lebanon.

Fatah, Hamas To Meet To Discuss Joint Committees

TA2001165593 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Jan 93 pp 1, 15

[Report by Samir Sa'd-al-Din]

[Excerpt] Tunis—It is expected that Fatah and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] will hold a meeting in Khartoum within the coming days to discuss the technical details pertaining to the joint committees agreed on by the two sides. The agreement was initialed on 4 January by Fatah Central Committee member Nasr Yusuf and Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq in the presence of

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the Pan-Arab Front, as witnesses.

These committees are:

The general committee, the intifadah committee, the committee of armed activity, and the bilateral coordination committee.

The general committee will deal with general political action. The intifadah committee will specialize in the operational coordination of the intifadah. One of its tasks will be to issue joint statements. Hence, it is expected that in the future the statements of the intifadah leadership and the Hamas leadership will be issued by a joint leadership from both sides.

It was also decided in this agreement to act jointly on the deportees issue in the countries of the world and in international organizations.

In these meetings the Fatah delegation will be headed by Fatah Central Committee member Salim al-Za'nun and will include Nasr Yusuf, 'Abd-al-'Aziz Shahin and Muhammad al-Dahlan, who have a special responsibility for the occupied territories, and 'Abd-al- Mun'im Abu-Sardanah, from 'Arafat's office.

The Hamas delegation will be headed by Dr. Musa Abu-Marzug and will include Hamas media spokesman Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, 'Imad al-'Alami, Dr. Muhammad al-Khudari, and Muhammad Siyam. [passage omitted]

Expulsions, Talks Challenge to PLO Leadership

JN2001105893 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Jan 93 pp 1, 3

[Report by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Maryam M. Shahin]

[Text] Amman—Of all the crises faced by the Palestinian leadership since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli peace talks in Madrid in the fall of 1991 the expuslion of 415 Palestinians from the occupied territories last month may prove to be the most critical.

The majority of the PLO leadership, the Damascus-based Palestinian hardliners and the negotiators themselves have linked the issue of the expelled Palestinians to the fate of Palestinian participation in the peace talks.

There has been wide-spread talk of boycotting the next round of talks, but nothing is seen as certain yet.

Only a small minority of Palestinian officials, namely the kitchen cabinet led by Yasir 'Arafat adviser Nabil Sha'th, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas and the now Yemen-based Bassam Abu-Sharif, believe that a linkage between the expellees and the peace talks is "not necessary."

While the kitchen cabinet is known among PLO insiders as the "American lobby," it is unlikely that their view will prevail at this juncture of the peace talks, most PLO officials believe.

Palestine Central Council (PCC) member Ibrahim Abu-Ayash says that the Palestinians "can't go to the next round if 'absolutely' nothing is done about the expellees."

"Some speck of concession will have to be made either by the Israelis or the United Nations, otherwise the Palestinian delegation will not be able to go," Mr. Abu-Ayash said.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Haydar Abd-al-Shafi and delegates Ghassan Khatib, Samir 'Abdallah, Zakariyah al-Agha and Ilyas Frayj have all said that they would not attend the next round of bilateral talks if the fate of the expelled Palestinians is not satisfactorily addressed.

PLO officials say that a boycott by the four Arab participants in the bilateral talks would put more significant pressure on Israel to comply with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 and return the exiled Palestinians.

Without a united Arab stand on this issue, PLO executives say a long Palestinian boycott is bound to carry "minimum clout and pressure on Israel" to even consider compliance with 799.

"We can still decide not to go. But let's just say it will be much more difficult to do this on our own. Should we decide not to go then we will have to be very precise in our calculations," said Jamil Hilal, head of the PLO Information Office in Tunis.

But Syria officially refused to boycott the bilaterals, saying not attending the multilateral talks is a better option.

Syria's outright refusal to consider the PLO's proposition at the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo last week was a blow to the PLO.

"The total lack of willingness of the part of Arab parties to the talks to boycott was upsetting although not really surprising," said one PLO official in Amman.

"There are two problems," the PLO official said. "One is that Israel is not budging on the issue of the 415 expelled Palestinians and the other is that without support from the Arab states and a united position on this issues and a back-up action we are almost powerless to do anything except boycott on our own."

In a statement made to Radio Monte Carlo this week, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak said that the peace process would continue to be "hampered" by the issue of the expelled Palestinians. The comment sparked hope in some Palestinian quarters that the Arab position may change vis-a-vis the threat of the boycott.

Mr. Mubarak spoke after a surprise visit to Damascus and the expellee issue was apparently on the agenda. But the visit of Egypt's Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to Israel apparently did not bear fruit as far as the expelled Palestinians were concerned.

While Israel has raised the number of expellees it says were sent to South Lebanon by mistake to 16 and has said that it was considering taking back those who were sick, a major move is yet to be made.

PLO officials as well as some Arab leaders have publicly suggested that Israel take back the expellees and put them in jail or "arrange" for a final verdict of the Supreme Court which would make the expulsions "unconstitutional" or "illegal."

Thus far the Israelis have not made a move and the Palestinians are sitting on a tight rope.

"If we go to the talks and the exiled men are still in South Lebanon we will be losers. If we don't go, the other Arabs will conlude a separate peace with Israel and we will still be losers because we will get nothing from the Israelis under such circumstances," concluded Muhammad Milhim, an Amman-based PNC [Palestine National Coincil] member who was expelled 13 years ago.

Many PLO members believe that if Mr. 'Arafat sanctions the participation of a Palestinian negotiating team without any satisfactory solution to the expellees crisis he "will lose the faith of his people and he will lose face."

"It will be political suicide if he does it," says PNC member Abu-Ayash.

While Palestinians ponder their future moves, PLO officials in Tunis are keeping their options open.

"All doors were still open" to the talks, Mr. Hilal maintained.

The PLO will announce no official position until an invitation to the Palestinian delegation is forwarded," he said. "There is no reason why we should announce our intentions before the United Nations special envoys have had time to brief the U.N. Security Council on the findings of their mission and make recommendations for further steps to be taken," Mr. Hilal added in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times. "Furthermore we have not been informed of either the time or the venue of the next bilateral meeting; so we cannot possibly respond."

Multinational Force Said Needed in Territories

TA1901144593 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 18 Jan 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Multinational Force Needed To Separate the Parties"]

[Text] Although peace is on the lips of all the parties to the Middle East conflict, the events of the past few weeks following the expulsion orders—the spiralling violence, including the killings of four Palestinians—is a strong signal indicating that the situation is getting out of hand and that traditional methods will only lead to the escalation of confrontation at the expense of reconciliation and peace in the area.

It is high time to think on a different level. If Israel is serious about peace with the Palestinians, a third party must take over from the Israeli military authorities in the occupied territories. A separation of forces is necessary to serve both as a cooling period and to bring back life to the efforts for peace in the region.

The Palestinian delegation formally conveyed to U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger that any resumption of the peace negotiations necessitates the return of those expelled in execution of Security Council Resolution 799. According to the delegation, the Palestinian side sees no possibility of resuming the negotiations before those expelled are brought back to their homeland. The united stand and strong public reaction to the expulsion are obvious proof of the Palestinian peoples' will.

Additionally, the delegation put forth three other basic requirements:

— Adjustment of Palestinian representation in the peace process to allow for direct PLO participation.

— Changing the framework of the negotiations, forcing Israel to admit the principle of withdrawal from the occupied territories.

— Activating the role of the sponsors.

In order to reverse prevailing conditions, the Israeli government has to seriously debate alternatives to the present hardline policies of the Rabin government, which are dealing death blows to the peace process.

The peace treaty signed between Egypt and Israel led to the placement of a multinational force, agreeable to both the Egyptians and Israelis, to monitor the security arrangements there. In our situation, in order to breathe life back into the stalled peace process, a multinational force separating Israelis and Palestinians would help prevent many incidents and would signal that Israel is serious about peace with the Palestinians.

Safeguarding human rights in the region is the most important confidence building measure for all local public opinion. It is essential to build trust in order to build peace. The present conditions and events will only lead to a increase in the cycle of violence.

Egypt

Foreign Minister Welcomes Knesset Move on PLO

NC2001161593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1454 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Tokyo, 20 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that the Israeli Knesset decision lifting the ban on dealing with the PLO is an important step in the right direction and demonstrates progress on the Israeli position toward realism. In a statement today, Musa said he hopes this step will be followed by others on the Palestinian deportees and their return home. He welcomed the significance, timing, and effects of this step, stressing that such Israeli steps should be encouraged and welcomed.

Foreign Ministry Official on Current Issues

NC2001170593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Jan 93

[News conference by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, with unidentified correspondents; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Baz] Egypt considers [the Israeli Knesset decision on contacts with the PLO] as a step in the right direction. Broadening the scope of dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian people and their legitimate representative will ultimately serve the cause of peace, bring both parties' views closer, and enhance bilateral understanding. This is an extremely vital issue; the Palestinian issue is the crux of the conflict. There is no alternative to direct negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel to address this issue. Broadening the scope of dialogue serves the goal of negotiations.

[Correspondent] Can we hope that the new U.S. Administration will back the peace process?

[Al-Baz] We hope it will; we do not believe that the U.S. responsibility dies when this administration departs. The United States has responsibilities in its capacity as a superpower, a permanent member of the Security Council, and one of the co-sponsors of the peace conference and negotiations. We, therefore, expect and hope that the United States will play a positive and effective role to activate the peace process. We believe that the visit new U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will pay to the region next month will be a step on this direction; it indicates the priority the U.S. Administration is giving to the situation in the Middle East and the peace efforts.

[Correspondent] Will there be (?coordination) in contacts with Israel on these issues following Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's return home?

[Al-Baz] We still hope that Israel will be responsive to the international community's will and find a way to solve this crisis, because it places an obstacle in the way of peace. We want efforts to focus on the peace process and not divert to secondary matters. Regardless of Israel's reasons for deporting the Palestinians, it should give first priority to securing a suitable atmosphere to resume negotiations without tension. The issue of the deportees is creating tension and making it difficult for the Palestinian negotiators to go to the negotiating table. We, therefore, hope that the Israeli Government finds a way out of this impasse.

[Correspondent] Regarding the Damascus Declaration and the new steps following the stagnation of the agreement, and in view of the finance ministers upcoming meeting in Doha and President Mubarak's visit to Syria and his call for broadening the scope of the agreement so that other Arab countries can join it....

[Al-Baz, interrupting] It seems that the signatories of the Damascus Declaration want to revitalize it. Some steps in this direction are expected. Circumstances show daily that the Damascus Declaration would strengthen security, peace, and development in the region. All these factors are very important in safeguarding stability and the vital interests of the Arab nation.

[Correspondent] Regarding Egyptian-Libyan relations, is there anything new in the talks between President Mubarak and Colonel al-Qadhdhafi?

[Al-Baz] Both presidents are determined to fulfill the ambitions of the Egyptian and Libyan peoples and bring about closer rapprochement and cohesion in interests, understanding, and joint action so that the steps that began with the opening of the borders will continue realistically in keeping with the peoples' acceptance. We want these steps to win the peoples' general agreement and express the ambitions of both peoples in establishing closer ties and promoting unified action.

[Correspondent] What about Libya's mediation efforts regarding Sudanese-Egyptian ties?

[Al-Baz] Egypt does not consider itself in a state of conflict with Sudan nor does it wish to create problems with it. We are interested in having close ties with the fraternal Sudanese people. We have certain objections to and reservations about certain policies of the Sudanese Government. We are objective in this respect. We are prepared to seek further understanding. Ending these differences depends on Sudan's willingness to achieve this goal. The Libyan leadership is interested in this issue as part of its concern about ties among Libya, Egypt, and Sudan and as part of its concern about finding a greater measure of Arab solidarity. We object to the Sudanese Government's methods in fabricating problems and crises, heating up the situation, and making it look like a crisis between the two countries.

Reportage on al-Qadhdhafi's Official Visit

Discusses Iraq With Mubarak

NC1901154593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] President Mubarak and brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, held a round of bilateral talks this morning at al-Qubbah Presidential Palace. They discussed the dimensions of the crisis between Iraq and both the UN and the coalition troops, the possible results of the recent developments in this crisis including the use of military force in the conflict, and the effect of these developments on the region.

The talks also touched on the differences between Egypt and Sudan over the Hala'ib triangle at the border between the two countries. Leaders Mubarak and al-Qadhdhafi also discussed bilateral relations and the need to ease the transfer of citizens and goods across the border. They also discussed the peace process, world affairs, a number of current international issues, and the issue of the Palestinian deportees. Following the talks, the two leaders headed for the Giza Pyramids area, where they inspected a number of new archaeological discoveries.

Cancels Alexandria Program

LD1901180693 Tripoli JANA in English 1749 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Tripoli, Ay-Annar [Jan] 19—JAMAHIRIYA NEWS AGENCY—JAMAHIRIYA NEWS AGENCY had learnt that the leader of the revolution cancelled the programme of meetings and festivities in the city of Alexandria to mourn the souls of innocent lives that fell in the city of Baghdad, which had been subjected to an unprecedented attack, similar to the foiled barabaric aggression on the Great Jamahiriya in 1986, which resulted in the death of numerous innocent victims, children, elderly and women.

The leader of the revolution offered his apologies to the citizens of Alexandria, its students and teachers, who he had not been able to meet, due to this catastrophic incident that befell the city of Baghdad, where the attack targeted the residential areas, including Hotel al-Rashid in the city centre. The savage attack has claimed many innocent civilians.

Talks Resume; al-Baz on Israeli Move

NC2001135693 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] President Husni Mubarak and Libyan revolution leader brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi resumed their talks at the Presidential Palace in al-Qubbah this morning. Afterward Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, told reporters that the Israeli Knesset decision allowing the Israelis to hold dialogue with the PLO is a positive step in the right direction. He said this move will eventually serve the cause of peace, enhance understanding between the two parties, and broaden the scope of dialogue to serve the goals of any negotiations.

Dr. al-Baz said Egypt hopes that the new U.S. Administration will continue to back the peace process and that the United States will play a positive and effective role to activate that process.

Meets With Arab League Chief

NC2001144393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1417 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (MENA)—Libyan Revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid met today and discussed the current situation in the Arab world and ways of strengthening the Arab League's role and effectiveness so as to achieve national and Arab goals, pan-Arab national security, and Arab solidarity. They also reviewed the situation in the Arab Gulf in light of the Iraqi Government's cease-fire announcement.

Briefs Ambassadors on Iraq Raids

LD2001213393 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution [Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] has received the ambassadors of Russia, China, and India at al-Qubbah Palace in Cairo in view of the urgent nature of the situation in the Gulf and the plight of the Palestinian deportees in southern Lebanon. During this meeting, the brother leader stressed the following:

1. The need to respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

2. An end to the use of force to solve problems in the world.

3. The need to respect the UN Charter and not to use it as a tool in the hands of the western states.

4. The double-standards have put the United Nations in a weak position vis-a-vis the peoples of the world because why have the resolutions on the Palestinian issue not been implemented? The UN Security Council resolution adopted in 1978 called for the withdrawal of the Israelis from southern Lebanon in 24 hours. Twenty-five [as heard] years have passed since then and it has not been implemented yet and Chapter 7 [of the UN Charter] has not been applied against the Israelis.

5. Why is Iraq being bombed with missiles and bombarded by aircraft? Any attempt to create a single axis in the world will push the peoples to rebel and this will in turn create chaos in the world. Four hundred Palestinians are now living in the open air and under the snow and the United Nations has done nothing. The three

states [Russia, China, India], by virtue of their relations with the peoples of the Third World, are called on to take a stand in order to preserve the United Nations and restore faith in it.

The three ambassadors later made a statement to JANA's correspondent in Cairo in which they said: We thank the brother leader of the revolution for receiving us. We listened carefully to his views on the Iraqi issue and the Palestinian deportees. In view of the extreme importance of these news [as heard] at this moment in time, we will convey this to our governments.

Confers With Prime Minister

NC2101150793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 21 Jan (MENA)—Libyan revolution leader brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi received Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi today at his place of residence in al-Qubbah Palace.

Dr. Sidqi said that during the meeting they reviewed various areas of bilateral cooperation. They also followed up on the implementation of the resolutions of the Higher Joint Egyptian-Libyan Committee with the aim of promoting and advancing bilateral cooperation. The Libyan liaison secretary in Egypt also attended the meeting.

U.S. 'Double Standards' on Iraq Condemned

NC1901123393 Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 16 Jan 93 p

["An Idea" column by Mustafa Amin]

[Text] A hundred planes to attack Iraq! This is like 100 elephants attacking a mosquito! The United States, England, and France did not need this huge force to strike four missile bases. More likely, the intention behind this large number was to scare the neighbors, Iran in particular.

The allies could have received backing from all parties had they treated Israel and Serbia the way they treated Iraq. But they have used double standards.

The reason behind the military attack on Iraq is that it refused to implement Security Council resolutions. Israel and Serbia also rejected the Security Council resolutions. Each one of them defied and derided the United Nations. Israel exceeded its defiance and exiled over 400 Palestinians from the country and left them to die in freezing conditions. All this did not move or anger the three countries because Israel is spoiled by the allies: If it commits an error, it is excused; if it commits a crime, it is forgiven. If an Arab country sticks its tongue out at Israel, the whole world gets up in arms against that country. If we do this, we would hear a great deal about being uncivilized terrorist states and aggressive beasts.

This is why some Arab countries condemned the tripartite aggression; other countries said the allies taught Iraq a lesson it will never forget, that Saddam Husayn will not forget this strike as long as he rules Iraq, and that the only way to get rid of Saddam's danger is to remove him.

We object to the allies carrying out a new strike against Iraq before Bush leaves office. We object to his sending Marines to fight in Iraq. This benefits Saddam more than harms him. It portrays him before some Arabs as a great hero fighting three superpowers, exactly as these people were impressed with President 'Abd-al-Nasir after his horrible defeat of 5 June.

We are opposed to the use of force and believe that the world gains more from peace than it does from war. We believe that it was possible to settle differences with Iraq without bombs and missiles. We also believe that if we use force with Iraq, we should use the same kind of force with Israel, Serbia, and every aggressive country. We should not divide the world into friends we approve of and enemies we do not.

Iraqi Pattern of 'Irresponsible' Acts Noted

NC1901150793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Ahmad Sha'ban commentary: "The Iraqi Regime's Practices Have a Negative Effect on the Iraqi People and Arab Causes"]

[Excerpts] Our Arab homeland undoubtedly is suffering today from the events taking place in the Arab arena. These accelerating events harm a number of Arab and Islamic issues for which it was hoped solutions could be found. Unfortunately, what the Arab people in general and the Iraqi people in particular are suffering from is the result of the irresponsible behavior of the ruling regime in Baghdad. He who traces the course of events from the early beginnings of this regime will realize that it has been following a systematic and unchanging pattern. According to this pattern, the regime provokes a certain crisis, stretches it to the limit, and when things reach the edge of the abyss—and sometimes war and destruction—the regime goes back to square one and accepts what it formerly insisted on rejecting. [passage omitted]

The same scenario is appearing again involving a new crisis with the United Nations and the coalition countries. The Iraqi regime moved missiles into the exclusion zone, its troops crossed the border with Kuwait more than once, it announced its refusal to pull back its six border posts set up inside Kuwaiti territory, and objected to the landing of UN aircraft carrying inspection teams in Baghdad. But following the first air strike on Wednesday, its UN delegate Nizar Hamdun announced Iraq's readiness to allow the UN aircraft to land in Iraq. Following the recent strike, the regime's information minister said that Iraq would accept pulling back its six border posts. Furthermore, Iraq pulled down the Iraqi flags raised at these posts and handed them to

UN troops. This leads us to ask once again: Why does the regime insist on adopting unsound and irresponsible positions harmful to Iraq and its people if it plans in the end to accept the will of the world community and legality?

Such practices by Saddam Husayn's regime greatly harm the miserable Iraqi people, who are afflicted by Saddam. They could do without this. These practices also adversely affect many Arab and Islamic issues. While Arab efforts were being mobilized to resolve the question of the Palestinian deportees and seek measures to force Israel take them back, another problem cropped up and became the focus of attention, thus shifting Arab attention away from the deportees issue.

The losses sustained by the Iraqi people as a result of the recent strikes cause pain for every Arab citizen and arouse sorrow in the hearts of those who sincerely wish good things for Arab issues. This leads us to ask: Is it the fate of the Iraqi people to continue to pay for their ruler's irresponsible acts? Is it the destiny of Arab causes to be moved to the back burner because of the ambitions of a ruler who enjoys having the world talk about him?

Opposition Paper Calls Saddam 'Foreign Tool'

NC1901133193 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 15 Jan 93 p 1

[Article by Jamal Badawi: "This Damned Satan"]

[Text] In the history of politics, the world has never known a ruler who hurt his nation and brought such disgrace and destruction on it like Iraq's ruler. Arab history has not known a ruler like him, one who caused the disintegration of the Arab nation and division of its fold and who dug with his iniquitous hands for the nation a trench of subservience to foreign domination indefinitely. By virtue of his efforts, the entire region has entered the framework of foreign protection, and bases and aircraft carriers deployed in the Arab waters are waiting for a signal from Iraq's ruler to protect some Arabs against other Arabs.

The danger behind Saddam is greater than we imagine. He is not just a dictator ruling his country with iron and fire. Had his mischief been limited to Iraq, it would have been the Iraqi peoples' responsibility alone, but it has exceeded the limit and spread as a cancer in the body of the entire Arab nation.

He has proven in word and deed that he is a foreign tool whose task is to implant a foreign presence in the oil area, disperse what is left of the Arab presence, and subjugate Arab interests to Western ones.

Look at the Arab nation's situation since Saddam's star appeared in the Arab sky: War with Iran for eight years then war with the United States and then an aggression against Kuwait that exhausted astronomical figures of Arab funds and ended with the division of Arabs into bands and groups. Some of them oppose him; others support him and trust his false slogans, in which he perfected raising the banner of pan-Arabism sometimes and the banner of Islam at other times. The final result was a full-blown defeat not only for Saddam but for all Arabs. The Arab word has become worthless and weightless in the international arena. The Arabs are now unable to hold even one summit now that the rift among them has enlarged, the wound deepened, and blood shed.

Look at the fate of the Arab presence on the international stage and you find nothing but an echo. The Security Council implements only the resolutions that serve Western interests whether in Iraq or in Libya. As for the resolutions that extract Arab rights from Israel, they remain ink on paper. The latest of these resolutions calls for the return of the Palestinian deportees to their homes and the resolution allowing Muslims of Bosnia-Hercegovina to use force to defend themselves against Serbian massacres. The Security Council has ignored all these human resolutions because the Arab presence no longer raises West's concern. Arab land has turned into protectorates that can not survive without the West's strong protection. All this thanks to this damned Satan, which they made and let loose to play his role to the end. This is miserable for all.

Opposition Paper Rejects Destruction of Iraqi Power

NC1901131793 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1028 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—In an editorial entitled "What About Israel's Nuclear Danger?", AL-WAFD, the mouthpiece of the opposition Wafd Party, writes today:

The United States is acting as if it has no other problem except Saddam Husayn and his violations, as if he has actually become the national enemy of the United States and the personal enemy of President George Bush, and as if the goal of all America, including the outgoing and the incoming presidents, is to destroy Saddam Husayn's power.

It has become clear now that the objective is no longer the person of Saddam or his regime; the objective is to destroy Iraq's power, army, and the Iraqi people's resources. Otherwise, why all these raids and all these tons of bombs and long-range highly destructive missiles?

The official American White House spokesman has announced that the objective of the raids was to destroy nuclear installations that produce material for nuclear weapons, that these attacks will not stop, and that Washington insists that Iraq abide by the UN resolutions and remove its weapons of mass destruction.

Yes, Saddam has made a mistake. But America wants to remind the world of Saddam's mistake when he occupied Kuwait: It attacked Saddam on the anniversary of this crime. But circumstances have changed, and it has become clear that the objective is to destroy the Iraqi Army and people. This is why the Arabs and the world have denounced the attacks on Iraq this week.

We say to America—and to Arab public opinion—that if the objective of the American attack is to remove the Iraqi nuclear danger, what about the Israeli nuclear danger? If the objective is to remove Iraq's weapons mass destruction possessed, what about Israel's weapons of mass destruction?

The Arab world rejects the recent American attacks because they leave Israel as the sole power in the area with nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

From this premise, Egypt and the Arab states have refused to sign the chemical weapons ban treaty until Israel is committed to signing it [as received].

The destruction of Iraq's power is a crime that we reject, and we must not be content with denouncing it.

'Excessive Bombardment' Against Iraq Criticized

NC2101080093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0620 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 21 Jan (MENA)—Under the headline "Observing Limits," AL-AHRAM's editorial today says that international reactions to the bombardment of Iraq varied, ranging between full and reserved support. All Arab and some international reactions denounced the excessive bombardment that wounded civilians and emphasized the need to comply with international legitimacy in all cases, instead of singling out Saddam Husayn.

Assume that the excuse common to all battles is the probable occurrence of unintentional mistakes—forces striking their own or accidentally harming civilians in schools, hospitals, or other gathering places. In the strike against Iraq, none of the allied powers volunteered to admit certain errors that harmed civilians. Missiles, no matter how precise, are not faultless. They denied this possibility in the case of al-Rashid Hotel. They even suggested the damage might have been the result of an error by the Iraqi artillery. Then there were the later explanations by Western media and the damage that involved civilians in other raids.

AL-AHRAM says the bombardment of civilians, especially those who already face an ordeal, invokes human sympathy and denunciation of and dismay at the perpetrators, even if it was a mistake. What if this error is taken to the extreme, particularly when the common man feels that the Iraqi people—not the leadership—do not deserve such excessive treatment?

The paper gives Saddam's use of prohibited gases to kill Kurdish people in northern Iraq as an illustration, noting that the incident triggered an almost overwhelming global human revolt against Saddam's regime.

'New U.S. Elephant' To 'Smash False Standards'

NC2001122493 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 0818 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—In his daily column in the newspaper AL-AHRAM, under the headline "Justice and The Forest", well-known writer and journalist Ahmad Bahjat writes:

Before the Soviet Union collapsed like a coat falling silently on the ground, two thugs dominated the world order—the U.S. elephant and the Russian bear. There were those who hid behind the tail of the U.S. elephant, seeking its protection, and those who hid behind the Russian bear, seeking its protection. The elephant and the bear would consider each other. Neither could devour the other and rule the forest alone.

This era has gone and a stranger era has come.

The Russian bear fell to the ground and said his feet could not support him. The other animals asked him: What has happened to you? He said: I am so hungry that I cannot stand or walk.

Since then a new world order has been born in the forest. The elephant has ruled the forest alone, going, coming, sitting, and standing. He has run after every violation to achieve discipline.

According to circus customs and rules, the old keeper should have tied the elephant properly before handing it over to the new keeper. But the old keeper did the opposite. He released the elephant on the spectators, causing panic and pandemonium. The elephant ran wild, lynching the spectators.

Never, in a transitional period, did a former U.S. President ignite a war. There is no logical answer to events, but to say that they are an attempt to embarrass new President Bill Clinton, to involve him in a war at the beginning of his term in office, and to cast a shadow of gloom on Clinton's inauguration ceremonies.

We hear that the elephant has become the new crowned king of the forest. We hear that he demands respect and obedience but demands them without achieving justice. He sees the wild pigs the Serbs release on the Muslims without blinking in dismay. He sees the wolves Israel releases on the Palestinians coolly and indifferently. He hastens to achieve justice by attacking civilians in hotels. What justice is this?

Even forests need justice. Without justice, no one will believe that the eye that has a thorn in it deserves to have the eye taken out while the eye that has a tree in it deserves compliments and blessing.

The new U.S. elephant must smash the false standards and use the same standards for all. If not, its prestige will suffer and it will become a blatant force.

U.S. Urged To Renounce Double Standards

NC2001071993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0602 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR says that those who renounce the international show of power against Iraq for refusing to comply with the UN Security Council resolutions express "their renunciation of the marked double standards being applied by those responsible for implementing the resolutions that they helped to issue."

In its editorial today, AL-AKHBAR expresses deep regret that these states rush to use the maximum power available to implement certain resolutions and shut their eyes to others.

The paper asks: How can the United States and its allies expect the public, particularly in the Arab and Muslim world, to (?accept) the downpour of missiles and shells on Iraq, when these same states refrain from disciplining the Serbs and Israel?

AL-AKHBAR says these two states refuse to implement the resolutions issued against them by the UN Security Council, although these resolutions involve the lives and safety of many people. The Serbs annihilate Bosnian Muslims and Israel expels hundreds of Palestinians from their homeland, subjecting them to certain death, the paper says.

The newspaper expresses the belief that many of the people in Arab, Muslim, and Third World countries, who voiced their dissatisfaction with the new air strike against Iraq, do not defend Saddam Husayn's irrational conduct and ridiculous and empty threats. It adds that these countries cannot help but notice that it is Iraq alone that attracts the attention of the states controlling the UN Security Council and the so-called new world order.

Daily Welcomes Clinton, Discusses World Crises

NC2001152293 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 17 Jan 93 p 14

[From the "Idea" column by Mustafa Amin]

[Text] In three days, on 20 January, Bill Clinton will enter the White House and become the most powerful man in the world. We are interested in seeing him fill this position and not becoming a toy in the hands of Zionism. We think he will gain a great deal if he takes a neutral stand on the Arabs and Zionism. He has no interest in Tel Aviv becoming the capital of the United States of America.

Some believe President Clinton will abandon his election promises, which were made to win the Jewish vote more than to serve the interest of America and the world.

Clinton will be received by the strangest welcoming committee in the world. It is a committee composed of the crisis with Iraqi, the crisis of Bosnia-Hercegovina, Somalia, and the new united Europe, the crisis with Libya, and scores of crises, problems, and troubles. It is a committee suitable for a eulogy more than for welcoming a new President.

The new President can gain much if he adheres to the U.S. Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Human Rights Charter, and UN principles.

The new President will make a mistake if he attempts to be the ruler or policeman of the world. It would be better for him to be the conscience of the world than to be its master. It would be better for him to work for the benefit of the United States instead of falling under the control of "Wall Street." It would be better for him to depend on the Human Rights Charter than on missiles, bombs, big armies, Stealth aircraft, and fleets.

Clinton can be one of history's heroes if he chooses to be a messenger of peace and champion of democracy. He can be one of history's goats if he goes after Zionism and the Jewish vote.

Finally, welcome to President Clinton.

Clinton Criticized for Comments on Israel

NC2001201793 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 18 Jan 93 p 5

[Editorial: "An Old Erroneous Logic Reappears"]

[Text] The strange and contradictory statements made recently by certain figures that will hold responsible posts in the new U.S. Administration, which will officially assume power in two days, regarding the U.S. position on the Palestinian deportees raise confusion rather than reassurance. These statements frankly say that Washington will not support any Security Council resolution condemning Israel for refusing to implement Resolution 799, which calls on Israel to immediately take the deportees back. They declare this position despite the fact that the United States unequivocally approved this resolution without amendment or reservation. Thus the U.S. Administration is required, like other Security Council members, particularly permanent members, to take necessary measures to implement this resolution, as happened with other countries that refused to comply with the Security Council resolutions.

It is strange that the U.S. Administration resorted—even before taking power—to the old practice followed by various former administrations: to describe all resolutions passed against Israel as lacking balance because, they claim, they do not condemn violence and terrorism to which Israel is reportedly exposed at the hands of Palestinian strugglers. These strugglers are using their legitimate and legal rights to struggle against the forces that occupy their land by force and so no one can describe their struggle as acts of violence and terrorism.

Other U.S. officials try to use the pretext of safeguarding the ongoing peace talks among Washington, the Arabs, and Israel, and their fear that any measure condemning the Rabin government on the deportation issue may lead to a halt of the talks. They had better accuse Israel of trying to torpedo the peace efforts with its inhuman decision to deport hundreds of Palestinians, a resolution that the Security Council and the entire international community consider to be a flagrant violation of international law and human rights. There is no doubt that adopting this position at this stage of the talks means only one thing: attempting to destroy the peace efforts so as to later accuse the Arabs of not wanting peace.

Clinton Urged To 'Restore' U.S. Credibility

NC2001221893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2130 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (MENA)—In tomorrow's edition, the Cairo newspaper AL-AKHBAR deals with Bill Clinton's assumption of power as President of the United States. The paper says that the new President is faced with pressing and significant international issues that require quick action, particularly since they concern the lives of many people. These issues have been ongoing for a long time, AL-AKHBAR added.

The paper says that today's two tragedies, which have become the two main topics carried by various world media, are: First, Bosnia-Hercegovina; and second, the Palestinian deportees, who have been kicked out of their homes in circumstances similar to receiving the death penalty.

AL-AKHBAR says that the new U.S. President can boost his position with the entire world if he begins his era by adopting quick just measures that would restore some of the credibility his country and the international organizations controlled by his country have lost.

Immediate U.S. Action on Bosnia, Deportees Urged

NC2101071893 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 21 Jan 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-AHRAM writes today: Bill Clinton is finally in the White House. According to U.S. tradition, a few months should pass before the new President takes any important step, particularly in foreign policy. Such a period is deemed necessary for him to study international problems as he begins his four-year term.

The paper adds: We do not object to this tradition that has its reasons and justifications, but we must note that some current international problems are so important and urgent as to necessitate immediate action. Lives are at risk in Bosnia-Hercegovina. Hundreds of Palestinians have been deported from their land by the Israeli Government.

These, the paper says, are problems that have been with us for some time. No politician, certainly not presidential candidates in major powers, could be unaware of their complications. So postponing decisions on such problems on the pretext that there is further need to study them is unconvincing.

Middle East Issues Facing Clinton Examined

NC2101160393 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Muhammad Sharaf commentary: "New U.S. President Bill Clinton and the Middle East Situation and Current Major World Issues"]

[Text] The wide-scale international interest in U.S. President Bill Clinton assuming office following his inauguration yesterday is completely justified. This interest is due to two main factors: The first is that the United States has become the sole superpower since the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the end of the cold war. The second reason is that President Clinton is heading a Democratic administration after 12 years of Republican leadership. Former President Ronald Reagan served two terms. He was succeeded by George Bush, who served one term.

To make things clear, when we say that the United States is the sole superpower today, we mean that there no longer is any ideological, economic, political, social, or cultural conflict between two superpowers or between a Western and an Eastern bloc as there was before the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Eastern bloc collapsed. The new world situation does not mean that there no longer is competition or even contradictions in the interests of the major powers, which apply the market economy system and pluralistic democracy. Competition exists and constantly is developing, as evidenced by the competition between the United States, Japan, the European Community, and others. Strong evidence indicates that giant China is moving firmly toward embarking on such competition and is trying to maintain its socialist ideology, benefiting from the collapse of the Soviet experiment.

This is not our subject. Our subject is the current international situation and its prospects now that President Clinton has assumed leadership of the strongest and richest country. There is no room here to talk about the urgent issues and problems facing the new U.S. President at home and abroad. There is, for example, the economic problems in the United States; an economy which has shrunk consistently over the past decades. Among the external problems facing Clinton are the trade relations between the United States, Japan, and the EC states. No one can disregard a problem which has and continues to have a profound effect on world developments and events; we mean the situation in the developing countries which constitute about two-thirds of the world's states, the political and economic problems of these states, their relations with the wealthy and developed countries, and their aspirations and legitimate political and human rights. It is clear that it will be impossible to establish what is called the new world order—which has been talked about often since the end of the cold war—unless the situations of the peoples of these countries and their legitimate vital interests are given top consideration. There also are the problems in Bosnia-Hercegovina and many other conflicts.

There also is, first and foremost, our issue here in the Middle East, which we want to discuss on the occasion of the new U.S. President taking office: the issue of establishing peace in the area on the basis of solving the Palestinian issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the crisis with Iraq, and establishing stability and security in this area, which never has known peace, stability, or security in past and recent centuries.

There is no argument that the United States is the most powerful and influential in directing events and developments in the area. With regard to security, stability, and peace in the Middle East, much will depend on the policies the United States pursues. President Clinton assumed office at a time when this regional and international issue is most forcefully and urgently being raised. There is the peace process in the area, which was initiated and cosponsored by the United States and Russia, and which is facing real danger as a result of Israel's positions and policies. There also is the crisis with Iraq and its close link to the security of the Gulf and the area, and the legitimate political and human rights of its peoples.

As is known, whether some like it or not, the United States holds the key to these two closely related issues. In his statements to the French media, President Husni Mubarak summed up the situation very well and in simple terms when he expressed his regret that the international community does not always apply the same yardstick in its dealings with Iraq and Israel, which do not abide by UN resolutions. He added that using a double standard encourages extremism.

All we can add is that unless there is commitment and sincere and energetic effort to apply the principles of international legitimacy and UN resolutions equally to all, this extremely sensitive area of the world will remain a region of turmoil and instability and of dangers constantly threatening the vital interests of all its peoples and the vital interests of other countries in this region.

Columnist Says Israel 'Our Principal Enemy'

NC1801163293 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 15 Jan 93 p 6

[Column by Ahmad Fu'ad: "The Real Danger"]

[Text] Israel is our principal enemy regardless of our attempts to glamorize reality or not to recognize it. The Israeli dream is a reality which undoubtedly is known to the officials in this country.

Border disputes, the wars raging here and there, and the export of terrorism should not distract our attention from this danger coming from the east, and I mean Israel. Tel Aviv's attempts to plunder Egyptian groundwater represent the most serious issue, particularly now that Israeli authorities have dug wells in an area a few kilometers from the Tabah border and installed powerful machines to pump the groundwater. The issue, therefore, is one of plundering water, and it is fateful for us.

Israel has even started building a nuclear reactor with Russian assistance just a few miles from the Egyptian border. Israel said this reactor will be built under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency to desalinate sea water. The Israeli authorities also have allowed personnel and companies to enter Egyptian territorial waters under the protection of the Israeli Defense Forces and destroy the reef.

All such deeds and excessiveness reveal Israel's aggressive intentions despite peace and treaties. The Foreign Ministry's stance on such attempts is the best proof of Egyptian diplomacy's vigilance regarding everything concerned with our security and safety. Israel's policy will not change, and Israel is the real past, present, and future danger.

Possibility of Israel Using Nuclear Arms Viewed

NC1501163293 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 15 Jan 93

[Commentary by Muhammad Sharaf: "Ridding the Middle East of Nuclear and Mass Destruction Weapons Is Necessary for the Establishment of Genuine Peace in the Region"]

[Text] Presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad met in Damascus on 13 January and said that Egypt and Syria will not sign the treaty banning chemical weapons until Israel signs the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Most Arab countries decided not to sign the international treaty banning chemical weapons. The signing ceremony for the said treaty was held in Paris yesterday. The ceremony took place as the Middle East peace process encountered serious difficulties.

The Arab countries' refusal to sign the international agreement and the difficulties facing the Middle East peace process are inter-linked. Both should be interpreted in light of the Palestinian deportees situation and Israel's policies, which totally conflict with the requirements of establishing a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry and the Arab League both stated that Arab countries will not reverse their position concerning the chemical weapons treaty unless all the countries in the region, including Israel, sign that treaty, and unless Israel also signs the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Serious measures should be taken to rid the Middle East of nuclear, biological, and chemical mass destruction weapons.

A source at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry says that the decision not to sign the chemical weapons treaty was not made in the context of viewing Israel as an adversary but as a country that should observe the same rules applied to other countries in the region. The said decision also was made to safeguard supreme [Arab] national interests as well as the safety of this and future generations.

It is illogical for the international community to ask Arab countries to adhere to international agreements banning all forms of nuclear weapons—nuclear, biological, and chemical—while leaving Israel alone with an arsenal of these weapons that not only threaten the safety of the region, but the peace and safety of the entire world.

It is a known fact that the great majority of Arab countries have signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, hoping that the international community will pressure Israel to do the same. But this did not happen. Israel continued to produce and stockpile nuclear and other mass destruction weapons as well as the means to deliver such weapons, including the Jericho missile, which can reach most Arab capitals. Israel is now the fifth-ranking nuclear power, according to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

The Egyptian political leadership is fully aware of the perils that such a situation entails for Egyptian and Arab national security. President Mubarak's initiative calling for ridding the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction has been officially deposited with the United Nations. The initiative has been continuing since the Middle East peace process was in its initial stages. Curbing the Middle East arms race and ridding the region of weapons of mass destruction are crucial steps toward achieving peace in this region.

We may state this for a fact: It is impossible to establish true peace in the Middle East until the regional arms race is halted and weapons of mass destruction are eliminated from the region. This is a simple fact that requires no further elaboration. It also is a reason to consider the Regional Armament Committee of the Middle East multilateral peace talks as one of the most crucial committees of the negotiations.

Let us turn to the crux of the matter: The Israeli Government's decision to deport 415 Palestinians, and many others before, and its rejection of the UN Security Council resolution on the immediate return of these deportees to their homeland reveals Israel's continued disregard for the so-called international legitimacy or international resolutions, including those passed unanimously by the UN Security Council. This actually is an old Israeli position—one that it was hoped the peace process, which began more than a year ago, would change. Softness on the part of Arab countries and the international community concerning Israel's stockpiling of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons could be ominous.

If Israel has shown itself capable of such disregard for the UN Security Council's unanimous resolutions—at a time when the peace process is in dire straits—what guarantees are there that Israel would refrain from using nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in any circumstances in which it deems necessary? We clearly are referring to a real threat that looms over the nations of the region; a peril that not only jeopardizes their safety, but their very existence.

The above-mentioned fact is too stark to be ignored by the Arab states and nations, the international community, or Israel for that matter. Israel is using its possession of nuclear and weapons of mass destruction to blackmail Arab countries and achieve hostile and illegitimate goals. True peace only can be established once the means of blackmail are abandoned and the principles and true spirit of peace are upheld.

Prime Minister Returns From Tunis 17 Jan

NC1801060593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2225 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and his delegation returned to Cairo tonight after a four-day visit to Tunis. During the visit, he conveyed a message from President Husni Mubarak to Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali dealing with bilateral relations and Arab and international issues.

Sidqi also chaired the meeting of the higher Egyptian-Tunisian committee, which concluded its work today.

Foreign Minister Leaves for Visit to Tokyo

NC1801130093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1154 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left Cairo for Tokyo at noon today on an official four-day visit to Japan at the invitation of his Japanese counterpart. [passage omitted]

Information Minister Departs for Bahrain, Oman

NC1701113693 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif left Cairo at noon today at the head of a media delegation on a tour of Bahrain and Oman.

In a departure statement at Cairo Airport, al-Sharif said he will hold talks in Bahrain to help both countries' media develop. He added that he will convey to the amir of Bahrain a message from President Husni Mubarak on Arab developments and issues.

On his visit to Oman, al-Sharif said he will convey a message from President Husni Mubarak to the sultan of Oman and will attend meetings of the Joint Ministerial Egyptian-Omani Media Committee to devise an executive program for 1993.

Security Forces Arrest Police Vehicle Attackers

NC1701183093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1710 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] Asyut, 17 Jan (MENA)—Asyut's security forces today arrested 'Abd-al-Rahman Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman, an extremist group leader who had taken part in the gun-fire attack on a police car in Dayrut al-Sharif village.

It transpired that the defendant, a teacher at Dayr Mawas Elementary School, had provided two explosive devices to two other extremists, along with instructions to use them against churches and the police.

The security forces also arrested the two other extremists: 'Abd-al-'Al Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Al and Faruq Mahmud 'Abd-al-Wahid.

Major General 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Hilali, assistant interior minister and Asyut security director, earlier had received information that an extremist group leader in Dayrut had opened fire on a police vehicle carrying Colonel Taha al-Zahid, the Interior Ministry's undercover police inspector, and Major Hisham Rashad, Dayrut's chief detective. A security soldier riding in the car was injured in the attack.

Upon his arrest, defendant 'Abd-al-Rahman Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman confessed that he had planned the attack and that defendant 'Ashraf 'Ali Ghazali, a student at Dayrut al-Sharif's secondary school, helped him carry it out. Ghazali also was arrested.

After his arrest, extremist 'Abd-al-'Al Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Al confessed that he tried to throw an explosive charge at a Dayrut church, and when he saw the police coming toward him, he hurled it in the general direction of the church to get rid of it. No one was hurt. The defendant confessed that he received the explosive charge from group leader 'Abd-al-Rahman Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman, who instructed him to throw it at the church.

Extremist Faruq Mahmud 'Abd-al-Wahid was arrested in another police ambush. He confessed that he had been given the explosive device found in his house by group leader 'Abd-al-Rahman Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman, who asked him to wait for instructions on what to do with it.

Maj. Gen. al-Hilali said that with the arrest of these extremists, the extremist ring in Dayrut al-Sharif—responsible for several recent criminal and terrorist operations—has been decisively shattered. He noted that intensive security campaigns will continue in various Asyut areas to uproot all terrorism and extremism.

Libya

Arabs Urged To Solve Problems Without Intervention

LD1901143993 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1000 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Tripoli, 19 Jan (JANA)—The newspaper AL-ZAHF AL-AKHDAR [the Green March] has stressed that the events taking place in the Arab homeland, by any standard, are a grave issue that threaten the future of the entire Arab nation and that there is no solution to these dangers unless all the Arabs become a single force capable of strengthening the wall of pan-Arab security.

The paper says under the caption: "Age of Arab Protectorates" that appropriating Arab security in this serious manner, which led to all these breaches and direct intervention, is considered a very serious issue for the future of the entire Arab nation, especially if each Arab state, on every Arab crisis, becomes an opportunity for foreign intervention in Arab soil. What is taking place in the Arab homeland today in the form of blatant foreign intervention in domestic affairs, whether these interventions are at the Arab request or under the framework of what is today termed "international legitimacy," is considered in actual fact a serious matter. The Arabs who failed to solve their local crises, and who (?assigned this task) in favor of foreign forces, which are well-known for their historical animosity toward the Arabs, are doing nothing except committing a cardinal sin against this nation, whose enemies are lying in wait from every side. Also, this weakness in the wall of pan-Arab security is the reason for some Arabs committing the crime of requesting foreign interventions, and not only this, but this weakness led to the humiliating Arab acceptance of what the enemies want to impose on the Arab nation. This is at a time when the historic enemies of the Arabs have been giving all support to the Zionists, who have refused to implement even one single UN Security Council resolution—the UN Security Council that has become an umbrella to cover any aggression against the Arabs. We have previously drawn attention to the dangers of foreign intervention in the Arab homeland.

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah's stand on the Kuwaiti crisis was clear and unambiguous. However, today we reaffirm our strong rejection of this repeated aggression against the Iraqi people and, on the other hand, we reaffirm to the entire Arab nation that Iraq is an Arab country and Kuwait is an Arab country and that the current crisis between them or between any two Arab countries should not be a reason for killing Arabs and destroying their capabilities in the manner that we see in Iraq or in Somalia. We again call on the Arab nation to solve its own problems in the manner that upholds its dignity, independence, and honor. It should work strongly in overcoming these crises by itself, without the need for these humiliating interventions, which led to turning some of the Arabs countries into protectorates and others into direct targets for foreign intervention, which was incorporated into the strategy of aggression against the Arab nation, with the aim of finishing it off. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Challenges Facing President Clinton Examined

JN2001173593 Manama WAKH in English 1510 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Manama, Jan 20 (GNA)—Commenting on Clinton inauguration today, the Bahraini English-language newspaper 'GULF DAILY NEWS' said in part: "Bill Clinton becomes leader of the world's only superpower today and inherits a mound of problems far different from his campaign issues.

"For a string of unanticipated foreign crises have ironically separated Clinton from his single-minded central theme - a promise to improve the economic lot of middle-class Americans.

"All these economic problems that helped him oust George Bush have not gone away.

"Runaway deficits, a sluggish economy and unemployment still plague the U.S.

"But they will be overshadowed from day one by the Iraqi crisis, U.S. troops patrolling lawless Somalia, a civil war in Bosnia and Haitians clamouring for U.S. asylum.

"Even more crucial will be Clinton's role in promoting a solvent and stable post-communist Russia and restarting stalled Middle East peace talks.

"It is an awesome test." [passage omitted]

Amir Receives Jordanian Chief Delegate 20 Jan

JN2001112693 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0855 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Manama, 20 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain, this morning received Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, member of the Bahrain University Board of Directors and head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks, on the occasion of his visit to Bahrain to attend a meeting of the Bahrain University Board of Directors and the graduation of the sixth class of Bahrain University students today.

Dr. al-Majali conveyed to the amir of Bahrain the greetings of his brother His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal, the monarch of Jordan. During the meeting, the two sides held a cordial discussion which dealt with current developments in the Arab arena and issues of common interest.

Jordan's Ambassador to Bahrain Dr. Shakir 'Arabiyat, attended the meeting.

Kuwait

Amir Sends Congratulations to President Clinton

LD2001194393 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] His highness the amir of the country sent a message of congratulations to His Excellency President Bill Clinton of the United States on the occasion of the latter's assumption of his official powers. The amir expressed sincerest wishes to the new president on his assumption of his great responsibilities. The amir expressed his hopes for the consolidation of the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries and for action to lay down the foundations of peace and understanding among nations and to end the suffering of all peoples.

Officials Praise Clinton, Bush

LD2001123993 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpts] At 2000 hours [Kuwait time] this evening outside the U.S. Congress building, U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton and invited leading figures will preside over the celebrations which usually take place every four years when a new president assumes office. [passage omitted]

His Highness the amir has sent a greetings telegram to His Excellency President Bill Clinton (?on taking up) his official powers as President of the United States of America. His Highness, may God protect him, expressed to President Clinton (?good wishes) on taking up his enormous responsibilities. He also expressed the hope that the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries will be strengthened, that peace and understanding among states will be entrenched, and that the suffering of all peoples will cease.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, expressed Kuwait's appreciation that President Bill Clinton has confirmed that he will follow the same path as President Bush in regard to protecting Kuwait's security and safeguarding stability in the area.

On this occasion, Kuwait, which has always acknowledged the mighty role President Bush played in defeating aggression, can never forget what President Bush did, and it praises his historic role.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said this to express appreciation of President Bush's stand.

Minister of Information Shaykh Sa'ud Nasir al-Sabah also praised President Bush, saying that Kuwaitis appreciate the historic stands President Bush adopted during the tyrannical Iraqi aggression against the State of Kuwait.

Directorate Says Patriot Missiles Ready To Launch

LD1901154793 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1222 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Jan (KUNA)—The Directorate for Moral Guidance and Public Relations at the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army has announced that the Patriot missile batteries are now in Kuwait and are ready to be launched at any moment to confront any possible danger or threat.

Memorandum to Arab League Protests Saddam Speech

LD2001221093 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 2100 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The state of Kuwait handed the Arab League Secretariat today a memorandum on the misleading statements in the latest speech by the head of the Iraqi regime regarding Kuwait. Official sources at the League told reporters that the memorandum views what was uttered in the speech of the head of the Iraqi regime as interference in Kuwait's internal affairs. Kuwait's mission to the Arab League asked that this Kuwaiti memorandum be considered as an official document for circulation to the Arab states.

Russia's Kozyrev Telephones Foreign Minister

LD1901160093 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1410 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Jan (KUNA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received a telephone call today from Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

In a statement sent to the KUWAITI NEWS AGENCY (KUNA), the Foreign Ministry indicated that Shaykh Sabah and his Russian counterpart discussed the latest developments in the region and issues of common interest.

Qatar

Newspaper Hopes for 'Unbiased' UN Security Council

JN2001173693 Manama WAKH in English 1520 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Manama, Jan 20 (GNA)—[passage omitted] Qatari daily "AL-RAYAH" expressed hope for establishing a new world order based on respect for international legitimacy and a positive role for the United Nations. The Arab and Islamic world along with world public opinion are looking forward for the new order, the paper said.

In a front-page editorial today, the paper criticized the five permanent member states of the Security Council for steering the council without consensus on one standard for the effective implementation of its resolutions.

Concluding, the paper called for a more effective and unbiased Security Council to enhance its credibility worldwide and warned that the world would turn into a jungle where only the strong could survive if international legitimacy and justice were not upheld by the council.

Saudi Arabia

King Receives Message From Yemen's President

LD1901145293 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1405 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Riyadh, 19 Jan (SPA)—The custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, may God preserve him, received a message from his excellency Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic of Yemen.

The message was delivered to the custodian of the two holy mosques by his excellency 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, minister of state for foreign affairs in the Republic of Yemen, when King Fahd received him today in his Royal Court at the Yamamah Palace.

The meeting was attended by his royal highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign affairs minister, and the Yemeni ambassador to the Kingdom, Mr. Ghalib 'Ali Jamil.

Yemen

Aid, Shelter Provided to Earthquake-Hit Areas

JN2001213093 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Today, the acts of delivering relief aid and shelter material to citizens in the District of Haydan and the nearby areas located in the District of Saqayn in the Sa'dah Governorate which were damaged by the earthquakes that have hit Haydan since 9 January, continued.

The Shelter and Relief Committee, as well as teams affiliated with the Yemeni Red Crescent Society today secured more tents, blankets, and medicines for those affected by the earthquakes there.

Sa'dah Deputy Governor brother Yahya al-Sha'if explained that five committees are currently working in the District of Haydan. These committees are performing their duties positively in the fields of seismological observation, housing, Yemeni Red Crescent Society activities, health, and civil defense, he noted. He added that the Haydan District officials are also performing their roles to provide those effected by the earthquakes with shelter and relief aid.

It is [illegible] be recalled that the number of tremors that have hit the two aforementioned areas up to 2200 yesterday, Tuesday, totaled 350,[number as heard] including six which registered 2 and 2.68 degrees on the Richter scale.

Minister Returns From Riyadh Visit With Message

JN2001210193 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Brother Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, minister of state for foreign affairs, returned to Sanaa from Riyadh today following a working visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during which he conveyed a written message from Presidential Council Chairman brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to his brother King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, custodian of the two holy mosques. During the visit, al-Dali also met with his brother Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal.

In a statement to the Yemeni News agency, SABA', brother al-Dali said that he is carrying a reply message to the brother president from his brother King Fahd.

The brother minister of state for foreign affairs expressed satisfaction over the fraternal sentiments displayed to him during his visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and also during his meeting with the custodian of the two holy mosques.

Concluding his statement, the brother minister affirmed that the visit will promote the interests of the fraternal Yemeni and Saudi peoples. He added that Yemen is concerned for extending bridges of fraternity and joint cooperation to countries of the region, as well as all fraternal and friendly countries.

Official, Media Comments on Clinton, Bush

Speaker on Future Ties

JN2001161993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1550 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 20 Jan (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has emphasized Iraq's sincere desire to establish constructive relations with the United States under the new Clinton administration.

During a meeting with a Spanish nongovernmental delegation today, Salih said that the people of Iraq hope that President Bill Clinton would not miscalculate, as did Bush, whose policy caused him to lead a sinful aggression against a peace- and freedom-loving nation.

Salih said that the best solution to unresolved political problems in the region is dialogue through diplomatic channels.

Salih noted the Iraqi people's suffering as a result of the continued unjust blockade against them. He added: We expect the new U.S. Administration to do its best to understand Iraq's just cause that seeks to lift the unjust blockade and preserve Iraq's sovereignty and security. [passage omitted]

Bush Action Said To Embarrass Clinton

JN1901141893 Baghdad INA in English 1335 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 19, INA—AL-IRAQ paper of Baghdad stressed that the crime against Iraq, only 72 hours before the expiry of Bush's term, could only be explained as an act of someone being in the throes of death.

In an article today, the paper said Bush new aggression clearly reflected his agitation, slipping nerves and moral breakdown.

The paper wondered if Bush had expected the Iraqis, who confronted the persistant 42-day bombardment, would surrender to his new attack, stressing that the people of Iraq had unique tolerance and were quite capabale of deterring the U.S.-Zionist plague.

The paper concluded that Bush's actions reflected his disturbed personality, confirming that his crimes against Iraq were also after dragging the new President-elect Bill Clinton's into a corner, apart from embarrassing and forcing him to face a fait accompli policy to that of his predecessor.

Bush Departs for 'Dustbin of History'

JN2001160093 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1440 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 20 Jan (INA)—The damnable criminal George Bush today ends his ominous tenure in office and departs for the dustbin of history while his hands are smeared with the blood of nations aspiring for freedom, independence, and self-determination.

Whoever reads Bush's file finds himself confronted with a huge record of ugly crimes—enough to make humanity ashamed of itself. The 30-state aggression against Iraq, which was prepared and led by the Bush administration, is one of the most heinous crimes in the history of mankind.

Criminal Bush refused to depart for the dustbin of history before spitting from his fangs what is left of the venom of hatred and malevolence toward the nation of Arabs and Iraq, symbol of this nation. Thus, Bush's missiles hit the al-Rashid Hotel in Baghdad in the last days of his tenure. Many innocent civilians were martyred and injured as a result of this attack. [passage omitted]

Government Announces Cease-Fire as of 20 Jan

JN1901181893 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1814 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Jan (INA)—Iraq has decided to observe a cease-fire as of tomorrow morning, Wednesday [20 January], as a show of goodwill toward the administration of new U.S. President Clinton and through him toward the American people.

A statement issued by the Revolution Command Council, [RCC] following a joint meeting of the RCC and the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party under the chairmanship of President Saddam Husayn, said that the cease-fire will take effect as of 0800 [0500 GMT] Baghdad time on 20 January, unless the other party opens fire.

The RCC said its decision to call a cease-fire comes on the occasion of a new president assuming power in the United States and is a gesture of goodwill on the part of Iraq to the new U.S. President Bill Clinton and through him to the American people and all lovers of peace and justice in the world, and expresses the will of the great Iraqi people, who have stressed their love for peace and belief in the supreme values of humanity.

The RCC explains that this initiative seeks to give the new U.S. Administration an opportunity to study the issue of the ban imposed on Iraqi flights in northern and southern Iraq, so the Clinton administration will, in a calm atmosphere free of the considerations of hostilities, know for certain that the decision to impose the ban was a unilateral, unjustified decision.

Following is the text of the RCC statement:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. In view of the fact that a new president is going to assume power in the United States, and as an Iraqi goodwill gesture to the new U.S. President Bill Clinton, and through him to the American people and all peace and justice loving people in the world; and as an expression of the desire of our great people, who have demonstrated their love for peace and their faith in humanity's supreme values, the RCC has decided to observe a cease-fire as of 0800 Baghdad time, [0500 GMT] on the morning of 20 January 1993 unless the other side opens fire.

We intend to give the new U.S. Administration an opportunity to study the issue of the ban imposed on Iraqi flights in northern and southern Iraq, so the U.S. Administration can ascertain in a calm atmosphre, free of the considerations of active hostilities, that the decision to impose that ban was a unilateral, unjustified decision by the former administration and its partners, made with the aim of achieving special political objectives which have nothing to do with UN resolutions, and also to give the new administration a chance to hold a constructive dialogue.

We believe that the new U.S. Administration will have enough time in the coming months to study this issue and understand the other issues, especially the issue of lifting the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq's people, although Iraq has complied with the unjust obligations imposed on it in accordance with Resolution 687.

Ramadan Comments on Action

JN1901214893 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council [RCC] member and vice president, has described the RCC's statement on Iraq's initiative to begin a cease-fire as of 0800 [0500 GMT] tomorrow, Wednesday, as a clear message addressed to new U.S. President Bill Clinton and to the whole world to assert Iraq's seriousness, credibility, and goodwill in solving problems through dialogue. During his reception of (Kazim Muhammad), leader of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, and (Hasan al-Hami Shukri), deputy leader of the Party, who are participating in the Sixth World Popular Islamic Conference, Ramadan said that Iraq had offered more than one initiative for serious cooperation to achieve peace and security free of double standards and selectivity. He pointed out that the realities of Bush's hostile policy against Iraq have been exposed to the U.S. and world public opinions. Ramadan then praised Iraqi-Malaysian relations and Malaysia's opposition to the policy of hegemony and interference in other states' domestic affairs. The Malaysian delegation praised leader President Saddam Husayn's courageous leadership, as well as the new construction campaign in Iraq in all areas, which proves the Iraqis' capability of building and defending their homeland.

Allies Urged To Examine Initiative

JN2001104793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0711 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Jan (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has called on the international parties to the aggression against Iraq to carefully examine the cease-fire initiative Iraq announced last night.

In its editorial today, the paper says: Through its peaceful initiative, Iraq has given the world quarters that support its legitimate defense of its rights, sovereignty, and independence, and the parties which have an independent approach a chance to turn over a new leaf and hold a constructive dialogue to tackle the situation through diplomatic channels in order to maintain world peace and the region's security and stability.

The paper urges the states which allied themselves with the Bush administration against Iraq to put an end to this alliance and to clearly see that it is not easy to shake Iraq's entity, and that it is impossible for its leadership, which is known for its independence, to relinquish its policy and concepts.

AL-JUMHURIYAH expresses optimism over international media reports on the growing criticism in world capitals of the air and missile raids against Iraq. It also expresses its satisfaction with the expanding wave of dismay in the world over the unilateral U.S. decision to carry out aggressive raids against Iraq and with the intensification of the international indignation over the policy of double standards the United Nations has adopted as a result of the Bush administration's pressures.

The paper expects that the will of the international community will further grow to reject Bush's unilateral policy—a will which calls on the United Nations to adopt an independent policy of issuing resolutions to lift the blockade imposed on Iraq—and to avoid many things that it, and the UN Security Council, have committed themselves to against their will.

Called Test of U.S. 'Credibility'

NC2101100593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Jan (INA)—Two Iraqi newspapers have asserted that Iraq's cease-fire initiative on the eve of President Bill Clinton's assumption of power in the United States will constitute a practical test of the credibility of the political sobriety that U.S. voters have judged Clinton to possess and in light of which they have brought him to power.

In their editorials today, the newspapers AL-QADISIYAH and AL- 'IRAQ express hope that the peace initiative Iraq announced on Tuesday night will be the key to enable Clinton to reopen the channels of normal relations between Baghdad and Washington after former President George Bush closed them "by demolishing, destroying, and sabotaging all the values and concepts that were supposed to govern U.S. relations with the Third World."

AL-QADISIYAH, mouthpiece of the Iraqi Defense Ministry, said the statement issued by the Revolution Command Council and the [Ba'th] Party's regional command in Iraq reflected Iraq's peaceful stance, its faith in constructive dialogue, its up-to-date dealing with international political change, its responsible and principled attitude, and its faith in the highest human ideals and in the spirit of constructive dialogue among nations, peoples, and political administrations to solve the most complicated international problems.

AL-QADISIYAH focuses on the criteria and new political method that the U.S. people respected in Clinton's electoral platform and which removed Bush from the White House, elevating Clinton to the Presidency. It adds that Iraq's peace initiative is designed to open doors to the new U.S. Administration to establish normal and equitable relations with Iraq based on respect for mutual interests and benefits and on renouncing the principle of violence among countries and nations.

Referring to Iraq's steadfastness in the face of Bush's foreign policy based on the principle of force and hegemony and noting the problems Bush left behind in the United States, the paper said these two factors can establish "objective foundations to turn over a new leaf in Iraqi-U.S. relations in a way that creates an appropriate climate for U.S. President Clinton to consider lifting the illegal air embargo imposed by the Bush administration and its allies after ascertaining that it was a unilateral and unjustified decision."

AL-'IRAQ describes the new peace initiative toward President Clinton as a sincere and truthful expression of Iraq's desire to turn over a new leaf in Iraqi-U.S. relations.

The paper recalls Iraq's efforts—despite its knowledge of Bush's hostile intentions and hegemonic objectives—to remove the specter of war and spare the region, which possesses the world's energy reserves, the dangers of military conflict. It says that from the start Iraq called for a dialogue and for sitting down at the negotiating table but "all its peaceful initiatives and proposals were categorically rejected, in addition to their acts of sedition and distortion."

The paper goes on to say: Today, after Bush's illusions, policies, and ideas have been dissipated, Iraq believes there is a real opportunity to open a new era of relations between Iraq and the United States. It stresses that Iraq's initiative, which derives from this belief, provides a positive atmosphere to start the serious dialogue "that is preceded by good intentions" and to turn over the page of the past with all its wounds and pain "that resulted from Bush's crimes and his mad war."

AL-'IRAQ voices appreciation for the magnitude and weight of the legacy and the pile of immense problems, troubles, crises, and political and economic burdens that Bush has left the new U.S. President. It says: In view of this, we do not ask the Clinton administration to tackle relations with Iraq immediately, "because there is ample time, as much as several months, to let it review all the former hostile stands and measures."

Concluding its editorial, AL-'IRAQ says: We are full of hope that the response will be "commensurate with President Clinton's responsibility to eliminate points of tension and spread a climate of peace, security, and safety, moving away from imposing imperialist options and measures and mandates of custodianship.

Team of 52 UN Weapons Inspectors Arrives

NC2101115393 Paris AFP in English 1137 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 21 (AFP)—A team of U.N. weapons inspectors arrived in Iraq on Thursday after the lifting of a flight ban, U.N. sources said here.

The 52 U.N. personnel, including a chemical weapons team, arrived from Bahrain.

Another 18 were due to arrive on Friday.

Ramadan Reaffirms Rejection of No-Flight Zones

JN1901161393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1525 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 19 Jan (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and vice president, has asserted that the final triumph over the alliance of the evil infidels is inevitable.

During a meeting with a delegation representing Tunisian parties, political forces, and trade unions, headed by Azzedine Chabi, Ramadan said the Mother of Battles, led by President Saddam Husayn, will be crowned with the clear victory over the imperialist, Zionist, and Atlantic aggressors. He also asserted that all their barbaric assaults and hostile, sinister methods will fail.

Taha Yasin Ramadan reaffirmed Iraq's categorical rejection of the no-flight zone decision imposed by the U.S., French, and British administrations, stressing the Iraqis' readiness to defend their sovereignty in land, sky, and water.

Ramadan said that the Arab and non-Arab countries which say they are concerned about Iraq's unity must stand in the face of the colonialist countries, which seek to partition Iraq, and declare publicly that they reject the policy to intervene in Iraq's domestic affairs.

The vice president asserted that Iraq is one in land and people and has been for thousands of years, and does not need a show of concern for its unity from others. He pointed out that the Iraqis are very capable of standing fast to shred any decision by the colonialists that infringes on the sovereignty of the people of Iraq and their independence and honor. [passage omitted]

UN Legal Department's Statement

JN2101103993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Jan (INA)—An official UN spokesman has said that UN Security Council resolutions have not authorized anyone to establish no-fly zones in Iraq.

In a statement yesterday, UN Spokesman Joe Cellis [name as received] cited the UN Legal Department as saying that the coalition states have interpreted Resolution 688 as they wish, stressing that this resolution was not based on Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, does not stipulate a ban on flights, and is not binding.

An INA correspondent in New York reports that the world organization had to announce its Legal Department's view at the insistence of journalists, who wanted to know where the department stands on Resolution 688.

It is worth noting that former U.S. President Bush had on several occasions claimed that the no-fly zones in Iraq were imposed in accordance with Resolution 688.

Spokesman Says 3 Killed in 19 Jan Air Raids

JN1901184693 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1828 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Jan (INA)—U.S. warplanes today raided a military position in Ninawa Governorate, 400 km north of Baghdad.

A military spokesman tonight said the aggression resulted in the martyrdom of three citizens and the injury of three more.

The spokesman pledged that our air defense units will remain lying in wait for the aggressors. He said our Armed Forces confronted the attacking aircraft with fierce fires and forced them to flee without fulfilling their mission.

Director Denies Bombed Plant Part of Nuclear Program

JN1901214193 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Jan 92

[Text] Domestic and foreign television and press correspondents and INA representatives this morning visited the al-Nida' enterprise for the manufacture of molds which came under large-scale missile attack during the new U.S.-British-French aggression. The Iraqi, Arab, and foreign correspondents inspected the various parts of the enterprise and witnessed the destruction of its buildings and that of the adjacent residential and civilian areas caused by the savage U.S. bombing. They also saw the remains of the rancorous U.S.-British-French missiles uncovered by the employees of the enterprise while trying to clear the rubble.

Answering reporters questions, the director of the enterprise said that the missile attacks concentrated on buildings and units containing machines producing molds and [word indistinct] which are used in public utilities, such as molds for motor and tractor engines and other agricultural machines, and other machines used for civilian purposes which has never been linked to the military from the time the enterprise was established in 1989 until it came under U.S. missiles which caused damage to both buildings and machines.

Answering a question about U.S. allegations that certain types of nuclear activities are carried out in the enterprise or that its machines produce materials used in nuclear weapons, the director said: The enterprise's products are related to services and civilian purposes and have nothing to do with the Iraqi nuclear program or with the missile program. He said the enterprise was there when they carried out their treacherous 30-state aggression in 1991 but they did not bomb it. He wondered what prompted them to bomb it now in such a heavy, large-scale manner. He said this means that they intended to destroy Iraq's progress in the scientific and services fields.

Saddam Orders Reconstruction

JN2001114493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1127 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 20 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has ordered the reconstruction of the al-Nida' enterprise for the manufacture of molds which sustained immense damage as a result of the recent U.S. aggression against Baghdad.

A responsible source at the Military Industrialization Organization [MIO] told INA that the mujahidin today started the reconstruction campaign on this enterprise, in which several MIO units will participate. [passage omitted]

Officer on MiG-29's Engaging Allied Aircraft

JN1901140293 Baghdad INA in English 1305 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, Jan. 19, INA—President Saddam Husayn ordered the honouring of six Iraqi military combatants who had downed eight American cruise missiles fired on Baghdad last Sunday.

The combatants were rewarded by a grant of half a million dinars for each cruise missile downed during the attack.

The sinister missile attack on Baghdad caused the death of three women and injury of scores of other civilians. Several missiles landed on residential areas and the al-Rashid Hotel in downtown Baghdad.

Yesterday, the Pentagon admitted that nine cruise missiles out of a total of 45 missiles fired on Baghdad did not reach their targets and that one of them fell in the Red Sea shortly after being launched from the American warship.

The Pentagon also admitted that the missile that had hit the al-Rashid Hotel in Baghdad was one of the 45 missiles launched on Baghdad last Sunday and claimed that it was a stray missile. The American officials alleged that the missile attack was targetting what they said was an installation of nuclear nature while al-Rashid is 25 kilometres away from the al-Nida' enterprise which is a civilian industrial installation that was hit by the American missiles.

Al-Nida' engineering enterprise has been inspected by U.N. inspection teams several times. The plant is a civilian workshop specialized in the design and fabrication of moulds and industrial equipment. Its equipment and production lines were thouroughly checked by the inspection teams. An official source said that U.N. teams were satisfied that none of its products or machinery were banned by the Security Council Resolution No. 687. The plant is surrounded by residential areas that had sustained heavy material damage and human casualties.

The missile that hit al-Rashid Hotel was [passage indistinct] during the aggression on Iraq in under the pretext that the hotel was accommodating an Iraq military command while Bush Administration was after intimidating the Arab and foreign journalists who were present at the time to cover the war and for forcing them to leave the country so that they would not convey realities to the world.

Last night, an Iraqi high ranking officer from the Air Force explained the facts related to the American missile attack and the significant role played by the Iraqi air defences in dealing with them and downing 25 per cent of the total missiles that were fired on Baghdad.

The Air Force officer also explained the nature of the air attacks carried out by enemy planes yesterday and said that 75 planes flew from the Saudi territory and the American carrier in the Gulf, Kitty Hawk for raiding civilian and vital targets in the southern Iraqi areas of al-Nasiriyah, al-Samawah, al-Najaf, the attack on the northern area of Mosul coincided with attacks on the south. The Air Force officer said that Iraqi air defences engaged the enemy planes and that Iraqi Air Force jet fighters, MiG-25 confronted eight formations of the enemy planes in southern Iraq and compelled them to flee.

He stressed that the Iraqi air defences and the jet fighters MiG- 29 managed to confront the enemy planes and the AWACS aircraft which was flying inside Iraqi air space along the Iraqi-Saudi border territory and forced them to flee.

Plane Seen 'Falling'; Regime Forces on Alert

NC2001201293 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] According to a report received from Khakurk, an Iraqi aircraft was seen falling yesterday near Khaliq camp. Eyewitnesses said they also saw the pilot bail out.

The report said the regime placed its security, intelligence, and anticrime forces in Khakurk on maximum alert, particularly in the Kurdish areas, causing alarm among the citizens.

Memorandum to UN Protests U.S. 'Violations'

JN1901154593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1335 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] New York, 19 Jan (INA)—Iraq has again denounced the violation of its airspace by a U-2, a U.S. espionage plane, which flies under the pretext of making an aerial survey for the Special Commission.

In a memorandum from the foreign minister to the UN secretary general, Iraq said the U.S. U-2 plane violated Iraqi airspace on 16 December, circling Baghdad 13 times for five hours and 25 minutes.

The memorandum pointed out that this plane violated Iraqi airspace again on 10 January flying over wide areas in southern Iraq for four and half hours.

It explained that this plane's violation of Iraqi airspace coincided with the violations of U.S., British, and French warplanes.

The memorandum also explained that the U-2, the U.S. espionage plane, resumed its violations of Iraqi airspace on 13 January, and acted simultaneously with the U.S.-British-French aggression against the Iraqi land.

It added that this plane, which was coming from its base on Saudi territory, flew over the western areas of Iraq for 25 minutes before it returned to its base.

It stressed that the violation of Iraqi airspace by the U.S. plane on the same day of the U.S.-British-French aggression emphasizes the hidden intentions of the anti-Iraq quarters, which use this plane for their aggressive objectives against Iraq.

It said that this makes it very clear that the mission of this plane is to carry out reconnaissance activities for the U.S. forces, and to facilitate the acts of aggression they commit against the Iraqi people.

It stressed that the activities of this plane in Iraqi airspace—under current circumstances—creates a technical problem, and demanded that these activities be stopped until the situation is cleared up.

Arab League Envoy Notes U.S., Allied 'Sorties'

JN2001142893 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Jan (INA)—Iraq today informed the Arab League General Secretariat about Iraqi airspace violations by U.S., British, and French aircraft taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, noting that this poses a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter addressed to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League said that U.S., British, and French aircraft carried out a total of 194 aggressive sorties last Saturday and Sunday [16 and 17 January], taking off from the bases noted above.

Iraq's representative asked that the letter be circulated to Arab League member states so they can take note of these regrettable facts.

Kuwaiti Request for Patriot Missiles Criticized

JN1901201193 Baghdad INA in English 1720 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, Jan. 19, INA—CNN television correspondent in Baghdad has said that the Government of Iraq commented on Kuwait rulers call for the deployment of Patriot missiles batteries in Kuwait, and Iraq's Minister of Information Mr Hamid Yusuf Hammadi said the United Nations inspection teams had ascertained that Iraq was no longer in possession of long-range missiles and the dossier of those missiles had been closed, according to the latest report by 45th UN inspection team headed by [name indistinct].

Mr Hammadi has added that Kuwait's rulers are afflicted with some sort of schizophrenia. They have not deemed it enough demanding Patriot missiles, but also asked the deployment of American, British and French forces.

The minister went on saying it seemed that those requests were also not sufficient because they had announced that they would build a 300m-long concrete wall equipped with electronic, electrical equipment and mines in north Kuwait similar to the Berlin Wall.

Mr Hammadi has emphasised it is better for the United States to send to Kuwait a force of psychiatrists instead of military troops.

Allied Action Said To 'Unwittingly' Help Saddam

PM1901133193 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 15 Jan 93 p 17

[Article by Khayrallah Khayrallah: "Iraq Dilemma for Arabs and the World"]

[Text] It was no coincidence that President Husni Mubarak visited Damascus on the day the Western coalition launched a new strike against Iraq. It was no coincidence that Mubarak's talks with President Hafiz al-Asad focused on the Iraqi situation. And it was no coincidence that the strike against Iraq was "limited." It reflects an Arab feeling which has begun to turn into a world feeling regarding how to deal with the Iraqi situation. This is because with the passage of time this situation has become an Arab dilemma and is now on its way to becoming a world dilemma, because it is opening the doors to radical changes in one of the world's sensitive regions.

More clearly, the Iraqi situation can only affect the Gulf and the Middle East as a whole. The Arab world and the world in general want to get rid of the present regime in Iraq. But they do not have a clear answer regarding Iraq's future and whether Iraq could remain one unit if the regime is toppled.

The West managed to launch a strike to let the Iraqi regime understand that it is still isolated and that it is not allowed to act as it wishes at all. But unwittingly this Western action has probably served the regime, namely by revealing that the West has no clear policy to deal with the sick man of the region. What is certain is that the limited strike will whet the Iraqi leadership's appetite for further adventures in the absence of the Arab or world capability to define a visualization of Iraq's future with its present regime gone. Can Egypt or Syria tolerate Iraq partitioned? Besides, if Iraq is partitioned, what will its south be like, in what orbit will the new state to be established therein revolve, and who would guarantee that this state would recognize the new borders with Kuwait? And what about the north? Will the establishment of a Kurdish state resolve Turkey's problem with its Kurds or Iran's problem? And even if Iraq remains one state, who could guarantee that no civil wars would break out in it, with the tragedies this could cause and the possibility of these wars spreading. And even in the best circumstances if we assume that Iraq remained one state and began to enjoy a reasonable and acceptable democratic regime, what would the impact of this be regionally?

In brief, no one has a clear answer regarding Iraq's future—which causes President Saddam Husayn to behave in the way he is behaving, as though his slogan at the present stage is "I am Iraq and Iraq is me... and after me comes the deluge." From now it can be said that the limited strike which President Bush launched against Saddam is not of the kind that will facilitate the task of Bill Clinton's administration. Actually the only aim of the strike seems to be to attempt to set a ceiling for the new administration in its dealings with Baghdad. And until this administration defines its own policy it seems that the real victim of the Arab and world helplessness is the Iraqi people, who no longer know to whom to complain...unless the Iraqi president has sufficient prudence to prompt him to stop playing the role of the bad guy and respond to Bill Clinton's advice regarding compliance with the UN resolutions.

SAIRI Calls Allied 'Muscle-Flexing' Futile

NC2001184793 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1450 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Statement issued by the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, SAIRI; date and place not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O heroic Iraqi people: The recent military confrontations between the allied states and tyrant Saddam's regime have once again proven the futility of the muscle-flexing policy pursued by the allied forces against the regime in Baghdad. This policy has not attained a decisive result so far, and Saddam's regime continues its aggressive practices against the Iraqi people, the nations of the region, and the world community.

The regime is still waiting for chances to obtain further [word indistinct] and aggression. It is trying hard to use the crises to strengthen its domestic position by covering for its solid defeat in the past and portraying itself as strong and triumphant. This is happening while our people are still suffering from hunger, oppression, and siege, and while all of us are witnessing political games and competition for interests between the parties concerned with the crisis.

The fact our people have realized from the beginning, and which the allied states and the United Nations must realize now, is that punishing Saddam should serve the movement of the Iraqi people and their [word indistinct] of the regime. The Iraqi people are the only ones who can accomplish this mission and spare the region and the world the threats to security and stability introduced by the regime. It is now clear to everybody after Saddam's repeated violations of international law that this regime constitutes a serious threat to international peace, regional security, and the unity of Iraq and its people. This has been proven by the regime's reckless adventures in the region and its continuing violations of human rights through collective killing and displacement of millions of Iraqis and through the use of all lethal weapons against the Iraqis and the peoples of the region.

We once again assert that the world community and the United Nations are responsible for ending the collective [word indistinct] and the continuous bloody oppression perpetrated by the regime services against the people of Iraq. These practices are more serious than the regime's violations of UN resolutions. We point out the need to fully implement Security Council Resolution [figure indistinct], which prevents the regime from practicing oppression against the people, and for sending fact-finding international observers to Iraq.

Talk about the unity of Iraq and its people is only (?empty slogans) by the Saddam regime and some of (?its politicians) who, to say the least, cannot see things as they really are in Iraq. All Iraqis are concerned and working for this unity. It is the regime that constitutes a real threat to this unity through oppression and persecution. We also demand that the scope of the embargo be expanded to include heavy weapons and that the appropriate mechanism be set to render the embargo effective and useful to our people.

O oppressed Iraqi people: We stand with you as you experience a tremendous plight caused by the forces of evil. We renew our determination and pledge to stand together in the joint trench of jihad against the most vicious tyrannical regime. We will continue the march until we achieve victory and restore Iraq's glorious role in the region and the world. Say: "I do admonish you on one point: that ye do stand up before God." [Koranic verse]

Officials, Media Comment on Future of New Presidency

Rabin Congratulates Clinton

TA2001192593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has sent a message of congratulations to Bill Clinton, the new President of the United States, wishing him success in his job.

In his message to Clinton, Rabin says that Israel has always been an ally and a friend of the United States and promises to continue acting in this spirit. Mr. Rabin continues: Mr. President, we are both devoted to principles that are common to our two nations. Rabin writes that Israel remains faithful to the peace process and is willing to take risks in order to attain peace. The prime minister emphasizes, however, that in order to take such risks Israel must be strong in the face of the dangers and threats in our region. Mr. Rabin is sure that the United States will continue to play a central role in creating the necessary balance between peace and security.

Herzog Wires Bush, Clinton

TA1901152293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] President Hayim Herzog today sent wires to George Bush and Bill Clinton on the eve of the change of administration tomorrow.

In his message to Clinton, President Herzog says he is convinced that the special ties between Israel and the United States will be preserved during his term, and that the peace process will make progress. In a message to Bush, Herzog notes Bush's contribution to the immigration of Ethiopian Jews and to the launching of peace talks, and lauds his leadership during the Gulf crisis.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has also sent a wire to George Bush expressing the Israeli people's appreciation and his personal gratitude for the way Bush has led the free world and shaped the international arena. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz notes that the wire says Bush's efforts to curtail the arms race and to protect democratic values, as well as his contribution to the fall of the iron curtain and the Berlin Wall, have left a mark on history. Jews throughout the world, as well as the citizens of Israel, will remember your important role in the opening of the former USSR gates and your action for the reunion of Ethiopian Jews, the prime minister writes to George Bush.

Active Involvement in Area Seen

TA2101090493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Jan 93 p A1

["Exclusive" report from Washington by Ori Nir and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Political elements in Jerusalem said yesterday that President Clinton is going to be very active in Middle East affairs and that he may send new Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the region in the coming days in an attempt to end the deportee affair, if no other solution is found. A decision on this matter will be made before the week is out.

It was emphasized in Jerusalem that the new batch of State Department and White House appointments attests to the great interest the new administration is going to evince in the peace process. The idea of appointing Ambassador Thomas Pickering as special Middle East envoy has not yet been taken off the agenda, and a decision on whether he is to join the team that will be in charge of the peace process is expected within a few days .

From Clinton's inaugural address, it was deduced in Jerusalem that he does not intend to abandon the United States' foreign relations and focus solely on domestic issues. Jerusalem officials said that the possibility that the deportee issue will be discussed at the Security Council soon compels Clinton to get right into the thick of Middle East affairs. [passage omitted]

[Another report by Ori Nir and 'Aqiva Eldar on page A1 of the same issue of HA'ARETZ states: Jerusalem received the report of the intention to appoint Richard Schifter as U.S. ambassador to Israel "with surprise and great satisfaction. Present Ambassador William Harrop has recently told officials in Jerusalem that there are no plans to replace him, and the Foreign Ministry had therefore no knowledge of the intention to appoint Schifter. It is said in Jerusalem that if appointed, Schifter will have great influence on the relationship between the two countries."]

Papers View Clinton Administration

TA2001162393

[Editorial Report] In their 20 January issues all Israeli papers report on Clinton's appointments and swearing-in ceremony in Washington, and carry editorial and other comment on the new U.S. Administration. The reports and comments point to the hopes and fears entertained in Israel in view of the new administration's policies and officials, as well as to possible disagreements and friction.

In its editorial on page 2, entitled "Clinton, Today," Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew pays tribute to George Bush, while cautioning against overexuberance: "Despite the friendship and the special relations, there is not, nor can there be, absolute identity between the interests of the two countries." On the threshold of the new era, it will suffice if "Bill Clinton and his administration continue to realize that Israel is a reliable and important U.S. ally, and will determine their policy according to this realization. The appointment of former Ambassador Sam Lewis to a senior State Department position bolsters the hope for a continuation of the special relations, as in Bush's days."

Also addressing himself to Sam Lewis' appointment, in an article on page A5, entitled "Content in Jerusalem With Samuel Lewis' Appointment; Rabin Is a Supporter of His Political Lore," HA'ARETZ political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar writes that "political circles said that if this report is true, it should be welcomed, since Lewis is considered a balanced diplomat who is well aware of Israel's political problems, as well as of the internal dispute around the future of the territories. Jerusalem officials believe that due to his Middle Eastern background Lewis will pay special attention to the peace process." Also, "a political source said that Lewis' appointment is intended, in his opinion, to appease Clinton's conservative Jewish supporters who complained that the round of Clinton's senior appointments disadvantaged the conservative circles." Eldar adds that "it may be assumed that Yitzhaq Rabin was satisfied to receive the reports on Lewis' return to the center of the political process."

In an editorial on page 2 of Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew, entitled "Terms of Peace," Amnon Barzilay writes that upon publication of Clinton's appointments for dealing with the peace process, it is becoming increasingly clear that "he intends to move forward, no doubt. In this sense, yesterday's Knesset decision to allow meetings with the PLO came with accidental but good timing, and can be well connected to what was called 'peace making' not long ago, before this making turned into paralysis." Clinton's "peace team" includes Sam Lewis, former U.S. ambassador to Israel and "an old friend," as well as Martin Indyk, both highly knowledgeable about the Middle Eastern conflict. Amnon Barzilay emphasizes that Lewis retired at the time because he was not appointed to the position of assistant secretary of state, so that "his present consent to return to a less senior State Department position indicates that he was promised by Secretary of State Warren Christopher that his position will be real and influential. This is what interests Lewis, and this is definitely an encouraging beginning for us."

In a report on Clinton's appointments on page 3, HA'ARETZ's Amnon Barzilay notes that "the unofficial reports about the peace process team emerging in the White House and State Department were received with satisfaction in Jerusalem yesterday. The assessment in Jerusalem yesterday was that this emerging team is highly knowledgeable about the Middle East and very well informed with regard to the peace process."

On a more general note, Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew, in its page 9 editorial, entitled "A New President in the United States," believes that Clinton will be facing difficult problems, which may result in foreign aid cuts, especially in the military sphere, "and Israel may find itself among those hurt as a result." As for the Arab-Israeli conflict, "there is a basis to believe that the Clinton administration will adopt positions to bring the negotiating parties closer, using its influence to achieve painful compromises."

In an article on page 11, entitled "What Was Will Be No More," 'AL HAMISHMAR's Pe'erli Shahar contends that although Israel took note of Clinton's election campaign announcement that he would refrain from imposing solutions unacceptable to Israel, "this announcement cannot guarantee that tensions and disagreements are impossible before solutions are found." Israel, for its part, "is making efforts to convince Clinton to get personally involved in the peace process, as was the case with Jimmy Carter at the time, and not to appoint a special Middle East envoy on his behalf." Jerusalem is also interested in a meeting between Rabin and Clinton before the resumption of the bilateral talks, "mainly to consolidate joint positions which would help Israel conduct the negotiations." Shahar adds that this is doubly significant in view of Israel's apprehension concerning "the positions of Warren Christopher, who is not known to be 'an enthusiastic Zionist,' to put it mildly." Other important issues which the two countries will have to work out, according to Shahar, are the issues of strategic cooperation, human rights, and nuclear weapons. Regarding human rights, Shahar notes "the importance attributed to this issue by the incoming president's energetic wife, Hillary." On the issue of nuclear weapons, Shahar points out the Democrats' commitment to limiting the arms race and to the policy of nuclear nonproliferation. "Israel—which has to date refused to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and promises to deal with this issue only after peace is achieved—could find itself in a confrontation with the new administration on this issue as well."

In a page 2 editorial entitled "A New President in the White House," Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew states that Clinton will immediately have to tackle the Iraqi problem. Noting that Clinton is the harbinger of a new style and a new generation, HATZOFE remarks that "his openness notwithstanding, Clinton is still a big unknown." HATZOFE notes that Israel will be closely following his first moves, hoping that "Clinton will be supportive of Israel and will refrain from exerting pressure on it, while contributing to solving the Arab-Israeli conflict peacefully." HATZOFE points out that Israel must present its case forcefully and without succumbing to concessions that would be detrimental to its long-term interests. The editorial ends expressing hope that "the change in the White House will be a blessing not only to the United States but also to Israel's foreign relations and security."

'Direction' of Clinton Team Viewed

TA1501145893 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 15 Jan 93 pp 15, 23

[Article by Hemi Shalev: "Pleased To Meet You"]

[Excerpts] Over two months have passed since it became known that Bill Clinton will be the 42d President of the United States, and in five days he will formally take over. Even prior to his election, but more so since his election, Jerusalem has been trying to figure out the new administration's expected policy, especially its immediate plans in relation to the peace process. The effort has been only partially successful, and even that is an understatement.

Two main, and perhaps also overlapping, reasons are responsible for the current perplexity among "decision-makers." Contradictory trends in the administration's ideology in all matters relating to Israel and the Middle East, and what appears to be a certain confusion and searching for direction among Clinton's people.

In a farewell meeting he held with the heads of the Israeli delegation to the political negotiations on 17 December, President Bush said he is sure that Clinton will "embrace" the peace process in its present format, and will stick to the principle of "continuity" in U.S. foreign policy. [passage omitted]

The Americans are considering the possibility of appointing a special senior envoy who will devote all his time to furthering the negotiations. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is not excited about the idea for a series of reasons, including the belief that the minute the envoy is appointed the Arabs will prefer to conduct their discussions with Israel through him, and not directly around the negotiating table. Ambassador Zalman Shoval in his meeting with Samuel Berger, who is designated to be deputy national security adviser, said that appointing an envoy might send the Arabs a message that the peace process is not the new administration's top priority, and as evidence, the President and secretary of state prefer to transfer its handling to a lower echelon. Israeli officials claim that appointing a special emissary might form among the Arabs an "incorrect" impression about the importance the United States gives to the process. At least they hope that such an impression is mistaken.

To the same extent, the debate continues in Washington about the need for a fast visit to the region by the secretary of state several weeks after the inauguration. The sides believe that high-level intervention is needed to get the peace talks back on track—after a forced suspension due to the change of administration and perhaps to protest over the deportations—and to signal a higher American interest in the process. Those who oppose the move support a more cautious approach and the continuation of the existing format, which has already proven itself. The international situation, they claim, poses more challenging objectives for the new administration than the Israeli-Arab conflict, which for the time being does not look as though it is going to blow up, and is anyway moving along a path toward progress on a settlement.

Lack of certainty also grips some of the senior officials in the State Department who have been involved in the process for years. Jerusalem fears a deep "putsch" in the State Department, which will bring in new people with whom "we have to start everything from the beginning," as a senior official in Jerusalem said this week. Among the veterans are Edward Djerejian, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, his deputy, Dan Kurtzer, and Dennis Ross, Baker's close aide, who identified too closely with the continuation of the previous administration, as well as his aide, Aharon Miller.

There are problems on the level of principles and ideology in trying to work out the intentions of the new administration. A good example of that is the administration's support for strengthening the United Nations as a chief instrument for implementing U.S. foreign policy, an approach supported by Clinton himself and the chief advocate is Anthony Lake, the designated national security adviser. There is an inherent disparity between that policy and Israel's basic approach to the peace process and Middle East affairs in general.

The expulsion of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists might force the Clinton administration to face a dilemma of the first order over the Security Council in its handling of three other main areas of crisis: Somalia, Yugoslavia, and Iraq. If the Israeli, American and the UN efforts to neutralize the deportee problem in the next week or two fails, the debate will go back to the Security Council for a tougher resolution, which will try to force on Israel the implementation of Resolution 799. The United States, no less than Israel, has a clear interest in preventing the council debate from deteriorating to the point that it could lead to a proposal for sanctions,. A vote on punitive actions against Israel would put the United States in a no-win situation. Imposing sanctions would create a sharp crisis with Israel and could bring about the collapse of the peace process. Not imposing sanctions, due to a U.S. veto, would undermine the status of the United States in the Security Council and sabotage its efforts to implement its policy of working through UN institutions, as well as create a fundamental crisis of confidence between it and the Arab states.

A similar disparity might be discovered between Clinton's consistent support for Israel and his desire for a value-oriented foreign policy, which includes consideration for human rights as a main component in formulating U.S. plans for action. Once again, the expulsion constitutes an excellent example of the dilemma facing the administration on all matters relating to the Middle East. It will want to avoid at any price the accusation that it is not being evenhanded in defining human rights violations.

(By the way, attention should be paid to the growing ambivalence in the attitude of Israeli leaders to the expected High Court of Justice deliberations on the legality of the expulsions. What first appeared to be a potential fatal attack on the government's prestige has slowly become the sole and honorable way out of the international embarrassment created by the expulsion. A court ruling that the expulsion was illegal will enable the government to return the deportees and even show off that the law is supreme in Israel.)

But the uncertainty about the administration is not only an outcome of internal contradictions and lack of direction. It also includes the personnel component of the administration's leadership, and the directions to be taken by the new Congress, and even Israel's relations with that vital focus of power, the Jewish lobby.

Secretary of State-designate Warren Christopher is described in Jerusalem as a quiet and solid bureaucrat, a talented man with little direct experience of the Israeli-Arab conflict, despite having been in Carter's State Department. One of his rare comments on issues relating to us should serve as a warning: He included Israel in remarks on Pakistan, Iran, and North Korea when referring to states which must have their nuclear power bridled and brought under international inspection. In general, if there is one thing on which there is certainty, it is the efforts the administration is expected to take to curtail the dissemination of nuclear weapons in the world. On that, it is said in Jerusalem, we can start worrying.

The beliefs held by Christopher's designated deputies are also unknown, as far as we are concerned. The concern about the fate of the officials who dealt directly with the peace process, derives, among other things, from Berger's statement to Shoval that the administration will try to form "teams," which will deal with the various policy issues in harmony and coordination. It is still not clear if "veterans" will be able to find their place in these teams.

Defense Secretary-designate Aspin is considered a supporter of Israel, but it is still hard to forecast what impact his desire to reduce the present U.S. military presence around the world and his readiness for a significant defense budget cut will have on Israel. National security adviser Lake is the "Carterite" in the group, the consistent supporter of a foreign policy of conciliation and not force, which aspires to human rights and an attempt to come to the rescue of minorities.

As a rule, the presence of "Carterites" in the new administration is also a reason for lack of clarity. First, there is an internal dispute in Israel over the term in reference to ourselves. Prime Minister Rabin, toward the end of his first term as prime minister, had unpleasant meetings with Carter and his policy, and Likud leaders, who were in principle opposed to Carter's humanitarian/Palestinian policy, are among those who are concerned about the phenomenon. The Israeli left, on the other hand, does not view "Carterites" as necessarily bad, as Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin took the trouble to announce to U.S. Jews during his recent visit to the United States. "I do not know of any President, except perhaps for Harry Truman, whom Israel owes so much."

Clinton, Vice-President Gore, and even Lake himself, continue to reiterate that they have weaned themselves from the negative aspects of Carter's foreign policy, especially his abhorrence of the use of force as a means to obtain political goals. The Jewish leaders in the United States, who have adopted the Likud's view of the Carter era, are waiting for this declaration to be backed by some proof.

Israel's relations with the Jewish lobby have also reached an undefined state, very much like the Jewish community's relationship with the administration. AIPAC [American-Israel Public Affairs Committee] leaders spent last week in Jerusalem in a clear attempt to wipe out memories of last summer's sharp confrontation with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and in a bid to coordinate positions before the new administration takes office. Rabin, who has apparently realized that the campaign he launched against the American Jews was unnecessary and harmful, would still prefer that AIPAC drop the habit it acquired in recent years of serving as a "middleman" not only between Israel and Congress but also between Israel and the administration; refocus on its original goals; and concentrate on the new, and as yet unfamiliar, Congress.

Rabin and some Jewish leaders are still busy exchanging discreet accusations regarding Jewish disappointment with the dearth of Jews in the new administration and with the small number of known and consistent Israel supporters who were appointed. In Israel it is felt that the Jews brought this on themselves by giving too high a profile to their connections with Clinton and his people. The Jews feel that Rabin's attack on them showed Clinton that Israel does not regard organized American Jewry as an indispensable part of the relations between the two countries and thus significantly weakened their status in Clinton's eyes.

Evidence of the troubled relationship between Israel and the recognized leadership of the Jewish community can also be found in the matter of the deportees. Israeli elements in the United States report that the Jewish organizations have never been so scattered and weak in defending Israel's good name.

There is another factor, that great unknown, which during Bush's tenure, at least, proved to be the primary factor in forming the United States' positive or negative attitude toward foreign countries in general and toward Israel in particular: chemistry. Rabin's first meeting with Clinton in August gives no grounds for optimism on this. Rabin even declared recently, with his inimitable tact, that the two men should hold an urgent meeting, because who knew if the warm remarks he heard in August would remain valid after Clinton entered the White House.

Even at the best of times, handling our relations with the United States demands the concentration of intellectual and managerial efforts befitting the greatest political challenge facing Israel. This is even more so the case now, as we stand at the verge of a new era, the nature of which remains to the most part unknown. The prime minister must make a supreme effort to rid himself of his deplorable habit of consulting only himself, or as the tired old joke goes, consulting the defense minister. Rabin considers himself the top expert on U.S. affairs. Even if there is some truth to this doubtful assumption, it is not enough. Clinton, for example, likes to invite five or six of his closest advisers and have them furiously argue some issue before formulating his final policy. That is the first step that Rabin can, and should, take on the eve of the era of uncertainty.

Knesset Lifts Ban on Meeting With PLO Personnel

TA1901211593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] The Knesset tonight approved the third reading of the amendments to the act banning meetings with representatives of terrorist organizations, abolishing a clause prohibiting meetings with PLO personnel. The abolition of this clause was supported by 39 coalition members and opposed by 20. Peace activist Abie Natan told correspondent Hayim Hecht that he will fly to Tunis tonight to appeal to Yasir 'Arafat for a PLO gesture in response to the Knesset resolution.

Rabin Absent During Vote

TA2001061493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] After a lengthy and sometimes acrimonious debate, the Knesset late last night withdrew the ban on meetings with the PLO and other Palestinian organizations that have engaged in terror actions against Israel. Less than half of the house was present as the vote was taken, 39 to 20. Among the absent was Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. Over to Knesset reporter David Ze'ev:

[Ze'ev] The prohibition has been repealed. Contacts with the PLO are now legal; so are meetings with other organizations, including Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and Islamic Jihad. Of course, ruling that such a meeting endangered state security would still result in a prison term. Cabinet Minister Ya'aqov Tzaban says the efforts will now be intensified to convince Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to open government contacts with the PLO. [passage omitted]

Minister Says No Change in Policy

TA2001083293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Telephone interview with Justice Minister David Liba'i by Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] There are those who say that by repealing the law we blotted out a blemish in Israel's law books. How do you view the amendment to the law? Do you view it mainly from a legal viewpoint, or also political?

[Liba'i] I myself said it is a blot in our law books and should be removed. The motive was more legalistic, but of course it has a political angle. The attempt to dictate a world outlook to private people and impose on them prohibitions which have political aspects is totally wrong under criminal law. Also the attempt to punish people for contacts which do not have any criminal intent and can be reasonably explained is also erroneous under the principles of criminal law. The difficulties that existed in implementing the law and the discrimination inherent in it were reasons for revoking it. Therefore, for all those reasons, which are based on the principles of criminal law, we had to expunge that offense, especially since the law books—and we repeatedly stress this—contain a clause banning contacts with members of terrorist organizations, but based on principles acceptable to criminal law, which are: If there is no reasonable explanation, if there is an intention to harm state security, or if a meeting has directly harmed state security.

[Qital] The question is: by repealing the law and making these meetings legitimate, will it not be hard to detain people who want to hold such meetings in order to do harm and not bring about benefits?

[Liba'i] Everybody knows, and it has been stressed by the government, that government policy is not to make contacts, not to conduct political negotiations, with the PLO. Under the government's basic guidelines, it is conducting the political negotiations according to the Madrid framework and format. As is known, the PLO is not a partner to Madrid. People have to take government policy into account. Up to now, if a person met with PLO leaders despite the prohibition, it was very interesting news, since everything prohibited is interesting—it sets off curiosity and international interest. In my view, if those private contacts continue they will not be of interest. It will become obvious that they do not change anything. Change and the ability to change can only be done by the Israeli Government. The Israeli Government did not need to change the law in order to hold contacts. Prior to yesterday's amendment, the law permitted holding meetings if there was authority or permission. The government can permit itself, its ministers, and its representatives to conduct contacts. It could do that also under the previous law. Therefore, from our viewpoint, the amendment does not signal a change in policy. There is no doubt, however, that the moment we refer to the fact that the leash has been extended regarding possible contacts, as long as they do not harm state security, whether it is for humanitarian reasons or peace contacts, it signals something in the political world.

[Qital] And now, the political issue. Why not hold contacts with the PLO?

[Liba'i] That is a policy issue on which the government has to decide. The current government position is that the inhabitants of the territories, when they negotiate, have an interest in reaching an interim arrangement—on autonomy—because they will take over leadership positions in the temporary administration and they will lead the Palestinian people. Those who are in Tunis—the

PLO—understand that in the interim stage they will not be permitted to come here. If that is so, then they will be neutralized in the interim, and three to five years is a serious stage in which a local leadership—which is cut off from, or at least not active in, the PLO—will grow and be strengthened

Therefore, it is natural that there is a trend which says: We undertook to negotiate with those living here, with whom we have to live, and not with the leaders of the terrorist organizations. We want to continue the negotiations with them. It is a political issue which definitely was discussed and is being studied at length by the government.

[Qital] Last question. Did you feel comfortable with the fact that the prime minister was absent from the plenum during the vote.

[Liba'i] I would like to stress that the bill was presented to the Knesset by me on the basis of a government decision, following intensive deliberations, with the knowledge of the prime minister, and in the name of the government, as well as in the wake of a decision by a Labor convention, where it was approved unanimously, as far as I remember. Therefore, it is the position of the party I represent in the Knesset, it is the stand of the government of which I am a member, and from that viewpoint, I felt very comfortable.

Commentator Views Results

TA2001164693 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 20 Jan 93 p 9

[Commentary by Hemi Shalev: "Negotiations in the Shadow of Other Encounters"]

[Text] The abolition of the law banning meetings with the PLO is bound to revolutionize the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians and to have a dramatic impact on future political negotiations. In this respect, some of the abolition opponents' arguments are valid: Within a short time, the PLO will evolve from a behind-the-scenes actor to a center-stage performer.

This far-reaching change is not self-evident. It would be natural to assume that once the ban is repealed, the situation will merely revert to the state of things before the law was passed eight years ago. However, due to changes brought on by time and by the legislation itself, this premise is basically wrong. The reversal will create an absolutely new situation, for which the Jerusalem policymakers may not be properly prepared.

When the Antiterror Act was passed in 1985, a majority of the public still regarded the PLO as an incorrigibly murderous organization. Israel was not conducting political negotiations with the Palestinians at that time; such negotiations were not even envisaged for the foreseeable future. All this was prior to the intifadah, which drastically changed Israeli and international public attitude toward the Palestinians. The Likud, together with Labor, were in power, and the chances of ever establishing another purely left-wing Israeli government seemed nil. The number of Israelis who wanted to meet with PLO representatives was minuscule, and those who did, were usually members of the "radical" left wing, far removed from national consensus.

Ironically, it was the legislation itself that produced a movement which demanded its abolition, a movement which has been preaching for negotiations with the PLO since. This phenomenon did not exist in such proportions prior to the legislation. At present, negotiations with the PLO are supported by a small majority of the public, but they are supported by a considerable majority in the country's two main ruling bodies: Labor and Meretz. The views of a handful of pioneers have been embraced by masses of people, including senior politicians and ministers, willing to tolerate direct contacts with the PLO. Even today most Israelis do not regard the PLO as an agreeable organization, but they have managed over the past decade to adjust to the spirit of the trite phrase that "it is with enemies that peace is discussed." Negotiations are anyway conducted with a delegation avowing full allegiance to the PLO's "elected institutions," and most of the public knows anyway that talks "by the book" are a sham disguising direct negotiations with the organization.

This public attitude, which emerged over the years, has now been compounded by the expulsion of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists, which had the support of 91 percent of the public. Most of these people embraced an argument voiced by the government when the decision was made: The State of Israel is now obligated to strengthen the "moderate elements," namely the PLO, at the expense of Muslim radicals.

In passing the act in 1985, the government wished to stop at the outset the meetings which a few Israelis then began to hold with the PLO. That trickle of meetings is now about to become an irresistible torrent. Dozens, and possibly hundreds, of encounters will be held in Europe and North Africa. Contacts with the Palestinians will never be the same, and the political negotiations themselves will suffer a violent jolt.

Mass encounters between Israeli figures and PLO personnel will accelerate the process of PLO acceptance by the Israeli public. As of now, an "almost direct" PLO-Israel dialogue will be possible, with figures acceptable to the administration taking messages and ideas back and forth. Furthermore, let us assume for a moment that in a month or two, a high-level encounter will be held in media limelights between an unofficial but senior Israeli delegation comprising Knesset members, senior members of the academic world, and perhaps even a few retired IDF [Israel Defense Forces] generals, with a senior Palestinian delegation composed of Yasir 'Arafat and his senior advisers, Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi, and other members of the Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks. Let us assume that the encounter's goal will be to hold debates in a bid to overcome the disagreements impeding the real negotiations and to try to produce an agreement acceptable to both sides.

Officially, the Israeli delegation will not be representing the Israeli Government, and its agreements will not bind the government, but this is a sham: Such an encounter will make the real negotiations seem utterly ridiculous. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and Elyaqim Rubinstein will look like junior actors insisting on remaining on stage although their audience moved on to another theater a long time ago. Also, the government will hardly be able to ignore substantive agreements with Palestinians even if they were achieved informally.

The abolition of the Antiterror Act and the meetings that will follow will soon enough bring about the resumption of the U.S.-PLO dialogue. In this respect, the prime minister's fears will come true. The U.S. Government can hardly boycott an organization conversing with Israel's social and political elite. Yet the resumption of the U.S.-PLO dialogue is a minor detail. Rabin, who does not have to give in to the majority of his cabinet ministers who support negotiations with the PLO, will be forced to surrender to a new reality which will commence tomorrow. Sooner or later—it is apparently going to be sooner—Israelis will converse with the truly elected Palestinian representatives.

Court To Rule on Deportees; UN Envoy Tries Again

UN Envoy Returns

TA1901185393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] UN envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan has returned to Israel. He will continue the discussions in an attempt to solve the deportee question.

Gharekhan is expected to meet with Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres.

Envoy, Peres Hold News Conference

TA2001073493 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 20 Jan 93

[News conference by UN envoy Chinmaya Gkarekhan and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres after their meeting at the Jerusalem Foreign Ministry; broadcast in progress—live]

[Text] [Peres] ...I think perhaps, and this is, of course, my personal feeling, that if there is some movement it will have an impact. We are not shutting our eyes and ears to these resolutions. In fact, the basic idea that the deportees sent away from here will return has helped us because some of them have to return after nine months any way, some after two years. The main thing on the agenda now, especially today, is the High Court ruling. I believe that the government would naturally not want to make any move which might influence the court's decision in any way. Therefore, we believe that we need patience, and after hearing the High Court's ruling we will decide our future moves.

[IDF Radio's Natan Gutman] Mr. Peres, did you discuss any humanitarian moves in this meeting?

[Peres] There is a division of labor between the International Red Cross [IRC] and the United Nations. The IRC deals with the humanitarian question. We have accepted some of the things it requested. The political aspect belongs to the United Nations, and Mr. Gharekhan himself said that he has come here on a political, not humanitarian, mission. The Arab world claims that there are double standards toward Iraq and Israel. Israel also says there are double standards, but toward Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Israel. The current situation should have started with a denunciation of Hamas. It is not that Israel woke up one day and decided to act against Hamas. The Israeli action is a response to what Hamas did. But we do not want to either cause embarrassment or to give prizes to the undeserving. We are therefore looking for a way out which does not give Hamas a trophy or constitutes a concession from Israel's main message, and which does not undermine the Security Council's honor.

[Gutman, in English] Mr. Gharekhan, could you tell us what is the timetable now in the Security Council about Resolution 799?

[Gharekhan, in English] The Security Council, I think it is already quite impatient on this matter. I am not prepared at this moment to give any definite deadline, but the fact of the matter is that the council feels that this matter has been delayed already enough, and it should not and cannot wait for any longer.

[Gutman translates the above and continues] Earlier, the UN envoy refused to go into details about his meeting with Peres. He only said, as Peres said later, that he came here to discuss the political and not humanitarian issue. In other words, Israel's gestures do not interest him too much. He came here with a mandate to call for a return of the deportees, and he will discuss only that mandate with Israel. Gharekhan will meet with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin soon, and then report back to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali on the outcome if his mission. We heard him say time is pressing, the United Nations is impatient to make a decision.

There is no progress. I doubt that progress was expected, but we heard Foreign Minister Peres say: We have to wait for the High Court ruling, and that might be the great savior.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0700 GMT on 20 January reports: "Israel has called on the UN envoy to try to make sure the Security Council does not convene to consider the deportees affair before the High Court of Justice rules on the matter."]

Attorney Says Deportation Political

TA2001124393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The High Court of Justice continues at this hour to hear petitions against the deportation of the more than 415 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad members. The expanded seven-justice panel has spent the morning hearing arguments from Civil Rights Attorney Avigdor Feldman. He is arguing that the selection of the deportees was arbitrary and violated their rights to due process. From the High Court, Miryam Herschlag reports:

The 17 December deportation was a vulgar mixing of politics and law, in which the government violated the relationship between the two, and stepped on the law. That's the argument of Attorney Avigdor Feldman, who continues at this hour to try proving his thesis to the seven High Court justices. Arguing on behalf of some of the deportees, Feldman said the expulsion amounted to collective punishment because the government had not sufficiently weighed the particulars of the individuals involved. The selection, he argued, was haphazard and arbitrary.

Feldman maintains that the government did all it could to execute its positive powers without leaving room for the negative safeguards built in to prevent abuse of power. He pointed to the haste with which the order was carried out, to the fact that the government spent only 10 minutes getting legal advice from the attorney general, and that it disregarded opposition to the order from State Attorney Dorit Beinisch. Feldman decried the absence of any appeal process before carrying out the order. Even a minimal appeal, he said, would have allowed officials to realize that the 16 year old mistakenly deported could not be a Hamas leader. Feldman acknowledged that the government had to respond to a harsh security situation at the time, but he said the court must decide whether the same ends could have been achieved without so great a violation of civil rights. And while expressing his grief over the brutal slaying of Nisim Toledano, which led to the expulsions, Feldman questioned whether that constituted a threat to the very existence of Israel.

The wheels of justice appear to be turning quite slowly today. Feldman is only the third petitioner of around a dozen. No one can say when the court will issue a judgment.

Court Ends Hearings; Ruling Awaited

TA2101062793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Excerpts] The High Court of Justice last night finished hearing petitions against the deportation of the more than 400 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad members. Attorney General Yosef Harish concluded his rebuttal at 2230, and next the seven-justice panel is to deliver a ruling, but not before Monday [25 January]. At the High Court was reporter Miryam Herschlag:

It may have been Justice Aharon Baraq's angry comment that the slow proceedings were only hurting the petitioners' own clients, but for whatever reason, the last eight or so lawyers cut their speaking time to around 15 minutes each—this after an eight-and-a-half- hour marathon by Attorney Avigdor Feldman, who said that overall the issue had gotten its due hearing. [passage omitted]

In his rebuttal, Attorney General Yosef Harish rejected claims that the Hamas and Islamic Jihad members had been deported arbitrarily. He submitted to the court a list of the deportees and their crimes and said they were serious offenses which involved inciting others to violence. Harish insisted there had never been a quota and also argued that the government decision had not been haphazard or hurried, but rather was made after hours of debate and after the idea of such a deportation had been floating around the defense establishment for plenty of time.

Most important, Harish strongly disputed claims that the deportation order and the way it was carried out denied the deportees' right of appeal. He was questioned by several justices on just how the deportees were supposed to appeal when they were cut off somewhere in Lebanon and could not appear in court. Harish conceded it was problematic but insisted they could be fairly represented without appearing. When pressed further, Harish said the government might find a way to bring individuals back for their hearings, if necessary.

The court has given Harish until Monday to submit some additional information, and only then will it issue a verdict on the matter.

Rabin Weighs Options

TA2101095393 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 21 Jan 93 p 3

[Report by Amnon Barzilay]

[Excerpts] If the High Court of Justice confirms the legality of the deportations, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin might decide on new steps in relation to the deportees without announcing any change in policy. These moves might include the return of the deportees, political sources in Jerusalem said yesterday. The sources noted that as long as there is no court ruling, Rabin is avoiding saying what his position will be so as not to influence the justices' decision.

Rabin's difficulty in expressing a clear position now, on the eve of the ruling, was discussed yesterday in his meeting with special UN envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan.

The envoy also met yesterday with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and is due to meet with Rabin once again today. [passage omitted]

It is important for Rabin that the High Court rule unequivocally that the steps taken by the government were legal. If there is such a ruling, Rabin will be able to take new steps, guided by the following principles: no repeal of the government's decision and no move that could be viewed as a victory for Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. To get rid of any obstacle to the resumption of the peace talks, and especially to start out fresh with Bill Clinton's administration, which would facilitate, among other things, his visit to Washington in the near future. [sentence as published]

Knesset Rejects No-Confidence Motions Over Report

TA1801193893 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Excerpt] The Knesset rejected a short time ago the two no-confidence motions in the government presented by the Likud and Tzomet over the state comptroller's report on party funding. The motions were rejected by 58 votes to 44. [passage omitted]

Bush's Legacy Viewed, Challenges Set for Clinton

JN2101093893 Amman THE STAR in English 21 Jan 93 p 12

[Editorial from the "Our Say..." column: "Clinton's Bitter Inheritance"]

[Text] Arabs and Americans alike may rejoice at the departure of President George Bush from office after four years, leaving behind a war-torn Middle East and a crippled US economy. While Mr. Bush withdraws to the quiet and easy life of a retired statesman, the Middle East boils and simmers as a result of his often short-sighted policies.

But as we welcome the new president of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton, we also hope with our hearts that he will prove to be the man he claimed he was during the election year. We know that Mr. Bush has left Mr. Clinton a bitter legacy of evil coalitions and burning crises. We know that the outgoing administration has done little to pacify the world, and indeed the Middle East region, in the last few weeks before its demise.

We may continue to feel angry and frustrated because of the myopic policies of the Bush administration that have brought havoc and destruction to an Arab country. We are entitled to look at the Bush days in power as bleak ones, when America proved not to be the gentler power Mr. Bush promised to lead and make. We will continue to associate the Bush administration with the horror of al-'Amiriyah, the destruction of mosques and churches throughout Iraq and the wanton killing of civilians. We will remember Mr. Bush for his unjust sanctions against Iraq and Libya, his abandoning of the people of Palestine and Bosnia and his manipulation of the United Nations and its Security Council.

President Clinton will have to get to work swiftly. As much as he would like to concentrate on domestic policies, the crises that America under Mr. Bush have ignited will pre-occupy him. It is here that he needs to show that he could lead both his country and the rest of the world out of the impossible impasse, where Mr. Bush has left us.

His judgment and understanding of the issues will mean a world's difference between sending in the F-15s and the Tomahawks or dispatching envoys to listen and comprehend. Mr. Bush had a unique opportunity to propagate America's values and ideals through setting an example to the world. He wasted it. Instead, the children of Iraq, Libya, Jordan, Lebanon, Bosnia and Palestine see America as the evil empire.

Mr. Clinton can remedy that, if he so chooses. He can bring the world together if he listens to what the world has to say. He is in a position to make things happen because the United States remains the strongest and most influential country on the face of the earth.

But power and strength aren't everything. Mr. Bush will know this more than any person.

To be the leading nation in the world, you have to be respected first. Under Mr. Bush, America lost that respect. Mr. Clinton will have to work hard to restore America's credibility in the world. In the Middle East, he will have to take courageous decisions, not about waging wars, but about making peace. Mr. Bush may have squandered the spoils of his forays in the Middle East. Bringing Arabs and Israelis together was not enough to complete the ingredients of the peace recipe. Just as bombing Iraq, instead of talking to its leadership, could not create regional security and stability.

What Mr. Clinton needs to do now is to understand the issues and the people who make them. He could turn over a new leaf and write a new chapter of Arab-American relations. He could help bring a just peace in the region and he could launch an era of reconciliation. In short, Mr. Clinton, unlike his predecessor, could pioneer a new course for America's foreign policy instead of becoming a victim of the analogies and ideologies of a polarized world that does not exist any more.

Al-Majali Hopes Clinton Will Give Momentum to Talks

JN2101101593 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0835 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Manama, 21 Jan (WAKH)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks, has expressed his hope that the new U.S. Administration, under President Clinton, will seek additional steps to give momentum to the peace process.

In a statement published by the Bahraini newspaper AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ today, Dr. al-Majali said that Jordanian-Israeli negotiations have reached the point of approving an agenda that was agreed upon, in principle, that includes the bases according to which future negotiations will proceed to achieve results. However, this will not take place until the other parties are on the same track and have the same momentum.

Dr. al-Majali emphasized that without the Palestinian issue, the talks cannot proceed on the right track and with the required depth. He noted that the parties will not come close to peace unless they face the crux of the matter vis-a-vis the Palestinian issue.

Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas Criticize Raids on Iraq

JN2001084793 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Jan 93 p 3

[Text] Amman (Petra)—The Muslim Brotherhood bloc at the Lower House of Parliament Tuesday condemned the recent U.S.-led attacks on Iraq, saying they were designed to oppress and humiliate the people of Iraq, destroy their economic resources and undermine their scientific achievements.

In a statement issued Tuesday, the bloc said the aggression is a total disregard for the Arab and Muslim nation, and therefore should be dealt with properly and seriously.

The statement said the aggression would not have taken place had it not been for total Arab silence and had the U.S. not received the green light from some Arab regimes.

The bloc called on Arabs and Muslims to unite in the face of danger, and stand up in defence of their sister Arab country, Iraq.

In a related development, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, Tuesday condemned the American-British-French "crimes" against Iraq and called for an immediate end to them. They also called on U.N. Secretary General Butrus Ghali to prove his independence and objectivity and to apply the same standards to all issues.

Hamas also called on the Arab and Muslim nations to rally and extend support to their brothers who are being "persecuted and oppressed by the forces of evil and darkness."

Minister on 'Enemies' of Arab, Muslim Nation

JN2001082893 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Jan 93 p 3

[Excerpt] Amman (Petra)—Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs 'Izz-al-Din al-Khatib al-Tamimi Tuesday launched a vehement attack on what he referred to as the "enemies of the Arab and Muslim nations for their atrocities against Muslims in Palestine, Iraq, Bosnia Herzegovina, India and Somalia."

"The enemies of the Arab and Muslim nations are confronting us with all hatred and repression in these regions and elsewhere around the world, but the nation's confidence in God and its faith is becoming stronger, lending us strength in the face of adversity," said Shaykh al-Tamimi in an address at a religious ceremony at King 'Abdallah Mosque in Amman, on the eve of the al-Isra' Wa al-Mi'raj holy feast.

Shaykh al-Tamimi, said "the enemies claim to be defenders of human dignity, but their actions and policies are nothing but a desecration and debasing of the dignity of man."

"We all see that their actions reflect anything but justice and virtue. They pursue their arrogance, seeking to subjugate and humiliate other nations through corruption, injustice, the demolition of homes and the murder of women and children," Shaykh al-Tamimi said.

The minister paid tribute to His Majesty King Husayn for "his relentless efforts to support the oppressed people of Palestine and to safeguard the Holy Sites in Jerusalem."

The ceremony was organised by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs which issued a statement saying the feast this year coincides with an escalation of attacks on Muslims around the world.

It called for unity of ranks and a liberation of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the other Holy Sites. [passage omitted]

Ministry Says Citizens Injured in Baghdad

JN1901175593 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] A responsible source from the Foreign Ministry has said that a cable from the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad states that some Jordanian citizens in Baghdad were injured by the recent missile attack on the Iraqi capital.

Those injured are Khalid 'Abd-al-Mun'im Dawud, Nidal Muhammad Judah, and Mawlud Mamduh Mawlud who are in good health. A fourth Jordanian citizen Amjad Tadrus, left a hospital after receiving treatment.

Engineers Send Funds To Rebuild Bombed Iraqi Plant

JN2101100693 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Jan 93 p 3

[Text] Amman (Petra)—The Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) Wednesday announced it was contributing JD 3,000 towards the reconstruction of the Iraqi engineering industrial plant which was raided by U.S. planes last Sunday. (JEA) President Husni Abu-Ghayda' said JEA will contribute another JD 1,000 towards nationwide fund-raising campaign to support Iraqi children. Mr. Abu-Ghayda' urged Jordanian public and private institutions to extend all possible help to the Iraqi people during these difficult times.

Iraqi Dinar Said Recovering After Attack

JN2101105793 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Jan 93 p 3

[Report by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Excerpt] Amman—The Iraqi dinar is slowly bouncing back to the levels in the Jordanian market prior to the latest flare-up between Baghdad and the U.S.-led coalition, but demand for the embattled currency has almost dried up, according to traders in the local market.

The Iraqi dinar, officially valued at $3.10, was being traded at 31 fils for "original" notes and 22 fils for "dented" notes at the close of business Tuesday, they said.

This compares with an all-time low of 26 fils and 16 fils respectively on Sunday, at the height of allied attacks on Iraq and high uncertainty over the fate of the government of Saddam Husayn in Baghdad.

However, the currency continues to be traded at between three and four cents in Baghdad, where it is a crime, punishable under law, to distinguish between the "original" and "dented" banknotes, travellers said.

"Originals" mean old notes printed before the eruption of the Gulf crises with the Iraqi government since then—the bulk of them on crude presses and photocopiers—are of bad quality and hence termed "dented."

"The allied air strikes on Iraq plunged the dinar to a record low last week," said a prominent dealer in Amman. "Apparently the conflict appeared more serious than ever, what with the perception that (U.S. President George) Bush could be trying to ensure that Saddam does not remain in power when he (Bush) himself would not be, in a few days' time."

The dinar "is slowly recovering now," said the dealer. But, he added, the demand for the currency "is limited to travellers to Iraq."

Most of the Iraqi dinars changing hands now in Jordan are the "dented" notes, banks, as well as private dealers, said.

"There is only a limited quantity of the originals available in Jordan these days after billions have been shipped to the Gulf states in the past two years," said one moneychanger.

He explained that the old Iraqi banknotes had a high speculative attraction among Gulf investors, Kuwaitis prominent among them, since its exchange value is highly fluctuative and dependent on the ups and downs in the lingering crises.

"They don't want the dented ones, and there is no market for such notes in the Gulf," said the dealer.

Another, and perhaps more significant reason behind the high demand for the "originals" in the Gulf market was a drive by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to hoard the old Iraqi banknotes with a view to enhancing the circulation of the "dented" notes and counterfeits.

At the same time, they could also flood the market with the "originals" at any given point and thus pull the rug from under the feet of Iraqi efforts to stabilise their currency, experts said.

"If the Gulf states could spend tens of billions of dollars to pay for the liberation of Kuwait, they could also very well spend a little more to undermine the Iraqi economy," said a senior official at a commercial bank which operates exchange houses.

"It is not a dead investment either," he said. "The hoarders could easily bring back the booty into the market once their main political objective is achieved—the ouster of Saddam Husayn. [passage omitted]

Amount of Iraqi Goods in Free Zones Detailed

JN2101114593 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 21 Jan 93 p 1

[Text] Jordanian free zones are now home to 1.5 billion dinars' worth of Iraqi goods, which Jordanian and non-Jordanian merchants have imported with the intention of reexporting to Iraq. Despite the fact that they are all foodstuffs, the export of which is not banned, the Ministry of Finance, the Customs Division, have deemed them prohibited and decreed that they be stored. It also levied high charges on the owners, forcing them to either lose or sell at very high prices in Iraq, thus increasing the pressure on Iraqi citizens, who are already facing heavy burdens.

Jordanian, Iraqi, and foreign merchants, who have goods stored in the free zones, provided us with the above mentioned statistics.

Speaker 'Arabiyat Praises Egypt's Pan-Arab Role

NC1901120193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0845 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Amman, 19 Jan (MENA)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat, speaker of the Jordanian House of Representatives, has affirmed that Jordan looks to Egypt with appreciation and respect because it is the gateway of goodness for the Arab nation. He said: When we talk about Egypt, we talk about ourselves and our existence because Egypt's weight and influential position are the center of the entire nation's gravity.

In an interview with MENA, Dr. 'Arabiyat said the Arab world is in dire need of practical and positive steps to reach the great objective we are all working for: inter-Arab reconciliation and the restoration of the nation's power and solidarity.

Dr. 'Arabiyat added that the Arab nation's situation now is painful and that as a nation with a great many assets and a joint destiny, we need to unite, work together, and restore life to this sleeping giant. He affirmed that despite all the darkness around us, we see a glimmer of hope because the nation has experienced more problems than now and has overcome them.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat said that the Arab parliaments play an important role in inter-Arab reconciliation and the reestablishment of unity to the Arab rank. The masses are not satisfied with developments in Arab relations and are looking to their governments to carry out reconciliation projects.

The Jordanian speaker called on Arab parliaments to work on paving the way for inter-Arab reconciliation and clearing the atmosphere for the sake of agreement, which we are greatly in need of. He said we ought to give this topic its real importance and work on realizing our people's aspirations for unity of word and cooperation among all to realize the objectives of the nation.

Dr. 'Arabiyat has condemned the severity of the inhuman Israeli practices against the Palestinian citizens in the occupied Arab territories, the latest of which was the deportation of over 400 citizens from their homes and land. He said the Arab Parliamentary Union is following up the implementation of the resolutions of its extraordinary conference recently held in Amman, to bring back the deportees to their homeland. He praised the role of the Egyptian delegation, which contributed effectively and positively during the meetings. He affirmed that Arab unanimity on this issue is an introduction of good things for the nation.

Media Comment on Clinton's Assumption of Office

Hizballah Radio Expects No Change

NC2101081593 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. It is Wednesday, the time for the handover of authority from U.S. President George Bush to his Democratic successor Bill Clinton. It will not mark a turning point for the U.S. outlook and policy toward oppressed nations, who suffer calamities and tragedies by the U.S. arrogant acts regardless of changing administrations and personalities.

Regrettably, the transfer of authority to a new President has worrying signs, particularly for the oppressed nations. From the moment the new U.S. President was elected, the rulers who exercise despotic power over their people have been preparing to give the new U.S. ruler all the strategic, economic, and financial interests he seeks so as to please him and be reassured of their own careers at the expense of their nations, land, and dignity. Most rulers today welcome Clinton's advent and sing his praises in the hope that they can exchange his silence over their behavior for any gains he might request.

Perhaps one of the worst and ugliest offers was that sent by Baghdad's tyrant the moment Clinton's victory was announced; the tyrant expressed joy by firing his pistol into the air. Then there came the artificial crisis during Bush's last week in power, giving the tyrant medals of courage and heroism mixed with the blood of the wronged Iraqi people. Finally there came the so-called goodwill gesture to new U.S. President Clinton. Actually it was a new submission, a new humiliation, and a new weakness for the entire Arab world by which the tyrant hoped to prolong the existence of his criminal regime.

Gambling on a change in U.S. policy on the oppressed nations is a losing bet. No one will be surprised if Clinton soon supports the Baghdad ruler's continuing rule on the grounds that he accepts his penitence. It should be no surprise if the new U.S. Administration disregards all human rights slogans. It will not come as a shock if it continues to use a double standard to serve its interests.

Position, Appointments Viewed

NC2101104793 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 20 Jan 93 p 1

[Article by Rafiq Khuri: "Dreamer and Ruler"]

[Excerpts] The new Rome changes Caesars and thinks of brokers. It brings down he who won the Cold and the Gulf Wars and raises another, who promises to win the trade battle. The world waits, not knowing what lies ahead, and the Middle East ghost lingers as always. [passage omitted]

Young Democratic President William Jefferson Clinton enters the White House with confident steps, just like the old Republican President Ronald Reagan. He selects figures in line with the challenges he faces and promises dreams that are nightmares for many. [passage omitted]

When Clinton was asked what motto he would like to have in his office, he said: "Don't stop thinking about tomorrow." But the new President who wants to revive the past and think about the future inherits today's problems. He starts where Bush stopped, not only in foreign policy, but also in certain domestic situations. He asks officials in charge of Iraq, Somalia, and the Middle East peace settlement—in particular Edward Djerejian and Denis Ross—to stay on. After all the dramatic talk about economic collapse, he discovers that he inherits the best inflation rate last year—2.9 percent according to a latest American report—and that "America is not going through an economic deterioration compared with other advanced industrialized states."

Like the rest of the world, Clinton has no option but to forget his electoral promises, based on the wise saying: "The art of candidacy is to promise everything, while the art of ruling is to choose." He has forgotten his pledge "to snatch authority from the bureaucracy and personal interests that govern Washington." Appointments in his administration are filled by representatives from more than one "lobby" and more than one person governed by personal interests. He even appointed the manager of his fund-raising campaign as White House political director. More is to come, especially on foreign policy and on situations in many states.

The person sitting in the White House is more a man motivated by interests and pressures than a man who formulates policies. It is easy for him to say his top priority is to build the domestic economy, prepare the Armed Forces to cope with new foreign challenges, or support democracy and human rights. The implementation of these policies encounters critical difficulties, considerations, and calculations. Crises do not consider the American President's schedule, although every state would like to delve into this schedule to learn what lies in store for it and on what it can gamble.

Nothing sums up President Clinton's position better than the caricature published in THE HERALD TRIBUNE and other American newspapers a few days ago. It shows Clinton in an astronaut's uniform, looking through an old cargo train window and making the victory sign with his fingers. The caption said: "The dreamer." It is a long way from the dreamer to the ruler, not only for President Clinton, but for the world. The world awaits what will be done to it and for it by the young Caesar who sits on the throne of the last and strongest empire. The Caesar tries to find out what he can do to what he calls "the military giant that is threatened with economic weakness and impaired vision."

Deportees Threaten To Cross Israeli Lines

NC1901194293 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] The Palestinian deportees today threatened to break through Israeli lines to return home, irrespective of the consequences. Deportee spokesman 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi said that the position of the Palestinian deportees is tragic and that they will be forced to trade one tragedy for another by marching toward Zummarayya crossing point regardless of the cost. He added that the deportees will not be able to remain in this miserable situation, suffering from hunger, thirst, and cold.

Al-Rantisi called on the Arab foreign ministers to meet and adopt a new measure that is commensurate with the current situation. He pointed out the diminishing of the deportees issue and the strike against Iraq, which was conducted under the pretext that Iraq has failed to comply with UN resolutions.

Seeking Greater Support

NC2001080793 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Deportee spokesman Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi said yesterday that the deportees might soon be forced to run from their current tragedy to a new one, heading for Zummarayya, come what may.

The deportees seek greater support, at least moral, from the Arabs, Muslims, and the United Nations, which has recognized the legitimacy of their cause but cannot implement its own resolutions.

The Palestinian deportees asked the Arab leaders to hold an emergency summit preceded by an emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers to work on implementing Security Council Resolution 799, which stipulates their immediate return to their homes.

Al-Rantisi said that when the United States carries out its practices against Iraq under the pretext that it refuses to give in to UN resolutions, we see the same United States ignoring Israeli behavior and even supporting it as it continues to reject the implementation of Security Council Resolution 799. Al-Rantisi also called on the Security Council and the UN secretary general to shoulder their responsibilities and show commitment to implementing their resolutions rather than apply double standards.

Hope for New U.S. Policy

NC2001133693 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, official spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, told our radio he has great hopes that Bill Clinton will change the U.S. policy, which in the past clearly practiced double standards. He said Clinton should begin a new stage in which the United States will not lose its credibility. A top priority, he added, is the deportees' issue; there is a Security Council resolution demanding their immediate return. We want an immediate return so that Israel will respect Security Council resolutions, he said.

Al-Rantisi said: We remind Bill Clinton that he should not listen to what Israel says when it describes Muslims as terrorists. Israel is the party that practices terrorism; the evidence is its shelling of houses with rockets and its killing of children, al-Rantisi maintained.

Immediate Return Demanded

NC2101065493 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, official spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, has responded to Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' statement that in his talks with UN envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan, he will seek a solution to the deportees' issue in the context of the relevant UN Security Council resolution but without rewarding Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. Al-Rantisi told our radio: This is thoughtless behavior. Peres should abide by the UN Security Council resolution, which provides for our immediate return to our homes, not prison.

He added: We tell the UN envoy we will reject any agreement about Resolution 799 that involves circumventing its clauses. We will accept only an immediate return to our homes. Otherwise, the Security Council will continue to use, in our opinion, double standards, not respecting its own resolutions, particularly those adopted in connection with Israel.

No March to Zummarayya

NC2101122793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, official spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, has said the Islamic world is running out of patience with the UN Security Council's tardy approach to the deportees issue, particularly the implementation of Resolution 799, which provides for their immediate return.

At a news conference today, al-Rantisi said plans by the U.S. secretary of state to visit occupied Palestine to discuss the deportees issue are positive. But, he said, we do not want any further delay, because we don't want to give Israel the chance to benefit from the passage of time or to avoid and diminish our issue.

In another development, the deportees' health unit [as heard] received 18 cases suffering from the cold.

Eyewitnesses said today that Israel brought six armored vehicles and 30 additional troops to the Zummarayya crossing at dawn, following reports by the mass media that the deportees will march to the gate tomorrow.

Al-Rantisi denied that the deportees plan to march to the crossing tomorrow.

Buwayz Views Peres 'Contradictory' Remarks on Deportations

NC1501183193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 15 Jan 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has commented on Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' statement that the deportation of Palestinians serves the goal of peace in the region. Buwayz described these remarks as meaningless. He told AFP that Peres' remarks are contradictory, adding that Israel complains of the resistance in the south and at the same time strengthens this resistance by deporting 400 very active ideological cadres to the region.

The foreign minister believes that the Israelis cannot criticize us for a certain military situation in the south and at the same time continue to feed it in this manner. He added: We long have been saying that the Israelis want to maintain an explosive situation in the south. The deportations are additional proof of this, he said.

Return 'Question of Time'

NC1601071393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 16 Jan 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said yesterday that international pressure on the Israeli Government has highlighted the rejection of Israel's decision to deport the Palestinians and that these pressures will eventually lead to the only solution: the return of these deportees to their homeland. He added that the Israeli Government's retraction of its decision has become a question of time.

Saddam's Survival Seen as U.S. 'Requirement'

NC1801105593 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Political commentary: "Saddam Husayn is U.S. Necessity"]

[Excerpt] We would have liked not to talk again about the Arab curse that is represented by Saddam Husayn in Iraq. For a decade, this man has been a major topic in Arab and international news and reports of his negative actions almost dominate all the news the nation needs to hear. The news shed light [words indistinct] instead of on his negative practices since he started to dominate Iraq. This accursed tyrant Saddam Husayn remains in power.

This talk might seem in keeping with the line of the Western allies who attack Iraq, its people, and resources, but the facts are different. There is intrigue with Saddam, his regime, tyranny, and intelligence service. Collusion began when Saddam started his liaison with Michel 'Aflaq [Christian cofounder of the Ba'th Party] and since 'Aflaq initiated his ruling to kill martyr al-Sadr [words indistinct] and besiege the Islamic Shiite ulema in holy al-Najaf, displacing its scholars and killing and jailing its students and placing religious scholar Abdolqasem Kho'i under house arrest until his death a few months ago. The collusion began when the West provided Saddam with advanced weaponry and prodded him to confront and attack the revolution of the Islamic Republic of Iran with all types of weapons—to besiege it and nip it in the bud. The collusion continues with the fabrication of media campaigns against the United States and the West and false parades and battles that exhausted the Arab nation and dragged all its leaders to humiliating negotiations with the Jewish enemy that usurps Palestine, Jerusalem, and al-Aqsa Mosque.

These failed media battles cover up positive and important news such as the Gulf war and the occupation of Kuwait at the peak of the intifadah in the occupied land. The current problems Saddam is fabricating relegate news of the Palestinian deportees and the outcries of the Muslims in Bosnia, India, Algeria, and Egypt. This analysis is not Islamic, biased, or an expression of partisan views. We know Saddam quite well. We know his lineage, upbringing, and party affiliation. We know him as ruler, despot, murderer, tyrant, psychopath, and paranoiac. We talked about Saddam's Islam, Arabism, his mania, agencies, and executions. We talked of indirect coordination between Saddam and the United States. Western analysts and neutral observers hostile to Islam say Saddam is a U.S. necessity. These analysts say Saddam's survival in power in Iraq is a U.S. requirement for two reasons: first, his departure without arranging a replacement may lead to the partitioning of Iraq, which goes against the U.S. policy in the region. That policy does not contemplate changing the political entities in the Middle East. This is why President Bush is concerned to keep Saddam in power and repeats his well-known remarks that changing the regime in Baghdad is the task of the Iraqi people and Army. Bush says this although there was an opportunity to overthrow Saddam during and after the Gulf war when uprisings were staged in the north, south, and central Iraq. Second, and more important, is U.S. fear of Islamic fundamentalism, which might replace Saddam. The United States does not want an Iraqi ruler who is reconciled with Iran. Saddam's stay in power in Baghdad secures for the West an essential presence in the Gulf and allows it to blackmail the oil-rich, weak regimes. The Iraqi regime intimidates these regimes and keeps them under U.S. subservience. U.S. Marines arrived in Kuwait only yesterday. The Iraqi regime could restrict the Islamic Republic of Iran and prevent its political and economic influence in the Gulf and the Arab world. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister's Office Denies Cabinet Reshuffle in Spring

NC1701192393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] The Prime Minister's Office has issued the following statement: Citing so-called ministerial sources, the AL-HAYAH newspaper reports today that the there may be a reshuffle of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri's government at the beginning of spring. The newspaper quotes Prime Minister al-Hariri on the performance of some ministers, particularly the ministers of services.

The Prime Minister's Office would like to affirm that the information published by the newspaper is completely untrue and that the government continues its work according to its current makeup, amid cooperation among the ministers and according to the program the government set for itself in the policy statement, on the basis of which it won the confidence of the Chamber of Deputies. In this policy statement, the government defined its priorities and the firm national principles on which it acts. The government, which also enjoys wide popular support, has prepared a work program in the field of public services, the results of which will appear successively during the spring.

Al-Hirawi Cancels Appointments Due to Illness

NC2101092793 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has canceled his appointments with members of the Chamber of Deputies today because he is sick and must stay in bed.

Al-Asad Congratulates Clinton on Inauguration

JN2101161693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 21 Jan 93

["Text" of cable of congratulations from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to U.S. President Bill Clinton on his inauguration; date not given]

[Text] On your inauguration as the 42d U.S. President, it pleases me to express to you my heartfelt congratulations and my best wishes to you, to your family, and to the American people.

At the start of your rule, I look forward to the continued enhancement of cooperation between our two countries and governments, whether in the field of bilateral ties to promote the interests of our two peoples, or in the Middle East peace process, which was launched under the joint auspices of both the United States and the Russian Federation.

I hope that your administration will play an active and effective role in helping this process achieve its objective of attaining a just and comprehensive peace on the agreed upon bases.

I would like to seize this opportunity to wish you success in your office, and also in promoting the cause of peace in our region and the world at large.

Media Comment on Clinton's Assumption of Office

Warned Against Using Bush's Approach

JN1901224293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The Republican U.S. Administration ends its last day in power tonight. President-elect Bill Clinton and his Democratic administration take office tomorrow, Wednesday, amid extreme tension prevailing in the Middle East.

This is because President Bush did not keep U.S. promises to work toward establishing a just, comprehensive peace in the region. The Washington talks, held within the framework of the Madrid conference, have continued to revolve in a vicious circle for more than a year as a result of the former and current Israeli rulers' refusal to implement UN resolutions, which were adopted as a basis for the peace process.

Advancing the peace process requires an effective position on the part of the United States in terms of putting pressure on Israel to make it comply with the will of international legitimacy. President Bush, however, went back on one of his most important decisions when he granted the Rabin government U.S. loan guarantees and gave it a free weapons deal. This made Rabin break his promise to advance the peace process and discuss issues fundamental to the Arab-Israeli conflict without delay—something which was expected by the Arabs.

President Bush also reneged on his commitment to cancel the policy of double standards and the use of two criteria. The Western raids on Iraq starkly exposed this policy while Israel continues to challenge the Security Council and reject its resolutions in broad daylight, and while international envoys continue to visit it to no avail.

Many people have developed a conviction that the raids aimed, among other things, to cover up Israel's heinous crime of deporting hundreds of Palestinians and leaving them in the open in the occupied south of Lebanon, as well as Israel's refusal to implement Security Council Resolution 799, and to distract the attention of the international community from the question of the deportees and their extreme suffering.

What is more serious still is that Israel has found a part to play in the Western game when it began talking about a role for it in imposing Security Council resolutions on Iraq, while it has not responded to a single Security Council resolution since its creation by force in Palestine and is challenging international legitimacy day and night.

It is natural amid such a charged atmosphere that tension will increase in the Middle East and that the Arabs would have fears that the new Democratic administration will get involved in the same approach. If this happens, the cause of peace would be lost and Israel's disobedience would increase. This would inevitably lead to investing U.S. loan guarantees and Western financial aid to promote Israeli settlement activity and destroy any hope of delivering the region from the whirlwind of wars and unrest.

Prior to the arrival of the international envoy in Israel to discuss the question of the Palestinian deportees, Yitzhaq Rabin reiterated his rejectionist stands and his demand that the Arabs provide Israel with secure borders. The secure borders, according to Israeli rulers, mean that the Arabs should surrender their occupied territories and sign official deeds to this effect. At a time when he makes it public that Israel would not withdraw from the Golan, Rabin is in fact calling on Syria to abandon comprehensive peace and to open borders, thus adding to his crude violations of UN resolutions a new violation of the foundations of the Madrid conference, which stipulates a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict on all fronts.

Israel's practices on the ground—including its killings, oppression, displacement, and attacks— are the complete antithesis of any peaceful endeavor. Israel's distorted interpretation of Security Council resolutions leaves no hope that progress can be made. Its challenge of international charters, without any one of the world's big powers lifting a finger, dissipates hopes that a firm, deterrent position can be taken by the international community.

The Arabs have been victims of Western collusion since the inception of Zionism and the establishment of its entity in Palestine. The Westerners helped establish the Israeli entity under the pretext of a UN resolution to establish two states in Palestine. They refused, however, to help the Palestinian people who were displaced from their homeland by force, violence, and horrendous massacres. All UN resolutions have remained mere ink on paper and no one has done anything to demand their implementation. Israel has also remained above international law, principles, and charters, entrenching its belligerence, killing and displacing more people, and occupying more territory. The outcome is the extreme tension we see today in the region.

The Palestinian deportees are today a living witness to the Security Council's inability to discharge its duties properly and to the continuation of the policy of double standards, which has done a grave damage to the peace cause and is threatening to bring about the collapse of the Washington talks and international credibility.

Press on 'Double Standards'

JN2001102893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0543 GMT 20 Jan 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH today wonders: How can we see a world free from tension and threats of wars? It says: Today, Republican U.S. President George Bush will end his presidential term to be replaced by Democrat President-elect Bill Clinton, whom we know only through the statements he made during the election campaign in which he focused on domestic issues such as the economy, environment, education, health, and social security. This, however, does not mean that Clinton is interested in foreign policy, because it is impossible to separate between domestic and foreign issues in the United States according to many sides.

The paper adds: Regarding the file of the Arab-Israeli conflict, it is true that the Bush administration had the initiative of holding the peace talks which began in Madrid. Their eighth round was concluded in Washington last month without making progress because the Bush administration failed to bring pressure to bear on Israel to implement UN resolutions on peace. It, however, extended all forms of support and help. This has encouraged Israel to continue its policy of killing, repression, arrest, and mass deportation, the most recent of which was the expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians from their land, who are left in the open air.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH calls on the United States, under the new administration, to play the role it should play in establishing a just peace in the whole world, particularly in the Middle East, especially since this region has direct effects on other issues.

The newspaper TISHRIN comments on the same subject of President-elect Bill Clinton's assuming power in the White House. It says: There are many questionable issues, most important of which is the dictum of double standards regarding the intransigent Israeli stand which rejects the resolutions of the international legitimacy—a rejection which has encountered no deterrence or pressures.

TISHRIN says: Had it not been for the Arabs' patience and determination to continue the peace talks, these talks would have collapsed as a result of Israel's refusal to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy at a time when the Arabs showed patience and concern and responded to the international efforts.

TISHRIN adds: One cannot deal with a fateful issue, such as the Middle East issue, except with a panoramic view. It considers that this issue measures new President Clinton's concern about U.S. interests and its political and international credibility regarding the principles of right and legitimacy.

The paper says: The U.S. Administration is now qualified to bolster its positive role on the international level, to triumph for international legitimacy, and to implement Resolution 799 on returning the Palestinian deportees to their homeland, especially since Israel's continued refusal to implement this rejection, in addition to its refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, is not only a defiance of the UN Security Council, but of the entire international community. This makes silence over such Israeli defiance impossible.

'Better Deal' Sought

JN2001202793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] After a 12-year interval, the Democrats return to the White House today when Bill Clinton becomes the 42d U.S. President. The magnitude of the problems he will have to contend with is such that Bill Clinton will, as one journalist put it, say good-bye to the smile that he kept throughout his election campaign, on his first day in the White House.

No one can make the claim that the outgoing Bush administration has acted more fairly toward the Arabs than any of its predecessors; indeed President Bush has on more than one occasion reiterated an abiding commitment to his predecessors' agenda, and that is to avail Israel of every possible material, military, and diplomatic support. However, this is not to forget the Bush administration's efforts on behalf of getting the peace process off the ground and then keeping it going. It is hoped that the incoming Democratic administration will prove more positive and fair as far as Arab issues and rights are concerned. This is because the fortunes of the peace process in no small way depend on the United States' continuing to nudge it forward. If the U.S. role were to take a back seat or disappear altogether, the peace process would certainly be negatively affected, given that, both under Shamir and then under Rabin, Israel has shown itself to be unenthusiastic about making peace, and that, if anything, Israel has been prevaricating to render the peace process a futile and meaningless exercise. This has become all the more clear by the expulsion of over 400 Palestinians and Israel's brazen defiance of international legitimacy. By turning a deaf ear to warnings from different corners of the world about the negative implications of the banishment of the Palestinians for the peace process, Israel has thus proved that it is actually going out of its way to scuttle the peace process. The Israeli temporizing tactics, presented in the spurious guise of flexibility, by receiving UN envoys and giving them the runaround in order to wriggle out of UN Security Council Resolution 799, and other deceptive gestures of a specious opening up to the Palestinians will cut no ice with any one. This is because such tactics only seek to split Palestinian ranks. All these indications demonstrate that, just now, peace does not figure on the Israeli agenda. Israel is out to wreck all the foundations that can sustain a true, just, and comprehensive peace under which Arab territory is evacuated, Palestinian rights are restored, and doors are opened to bring stability, security, and development to the region.

The statements made by the incoming U.S. Administration indicating a commitment to the peace process and the fact that Clinton is retaining the State Department personnel that handled the peace process during the Bush administration are a good sign. However, the new administration has yet to show in practice and by adopting a balanced posture how much it wants to make a go of the peace process. And whereas the Arabs have proved their peace intentions and their commitment to UN resolutions, Israel, in both word and deed, has proved the lack of both. The world is now all too aware of the risks involved in Israel's conduct pretending to want peace, while, in practice, working against it, and all the time flouting international legitimacy. The international community has made it plain that it can no longer afford to pander to Israel. The international community wants Israel to comply with Security Council Resolution 799 calling for it to take back the Palestinian evictees. The world has condemned the Israeli procrastinating and temporizing tactics.

When Bill Clinton reports to work at the White House tomorrow, the Middle East question—including the peace process and the Palestinian expellees issue, which is inextricably bound with it—will be one of the pressing items that he will have to tackle and then make clear-cut decisions about. It is hoped that the Arabs will get a better deal from the Clinton administration than the ones they had from his predecessors and that it will be less biased to Israel's belligerent, provocative, and expansionist postures.

Paper Views 'First Test'

JN2101071793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Jan 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-THAWRAH writes about the new phase in U.S. policy now that the ceremonial part of the White House transfer of power is over. The paper adds that the key to peace is in the hands of the United States, which must act wisely and realize that what is offered by peace is different from what is offered by war. Israel wants the U.S. Administration to give it everything it needs to aid its aggression against the Arabs, implement its expansionist policies, and continue its violations of human rights and defiance of international legitimacy without fear of the consequences.

AL-THAWRAH says: In the cable of congratulations he sent to President Clinton following the announcement of his election victory, President Hafiz al-Asad expressed the hope that Syrian-U.S. relations would continue to improve. He also said that he is confident the peace process will continue on the same bases upon which it was launched. The same view was shared by many Arab and foreign leaders in the region and the world because peace is no longer a regional or an Arab demand, but a pressing need for the entire world.

The paper adds: As far as the Arabs are concerned, the first test facing the credibility of President Clinton's administration will be the application of international legitimacy according to a single standard. They look forward to the implementation of international legitimacy in a straight line and with a single standard, without bias toward or appeasement for Israel, which will remain the only challenger of international legitimacy unless Washington makes it know that it is not above international legitimacy.

Lebanon's Buwayz Meets Khaddam, Leaves for Tehran

NC1901224593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2135 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Damascus, 19 Jan (MENA)—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz left Damascus for Tehran today on an official visit to Iran.

Before leaving the Syrian capital, he met with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and discussed with him issues of interest to the two countries.

Buwayz told MENA that his talks with Khaddam dealt with developments in the region in light of the current events and the new U.S. Administration, and these two factors' impact on the progress of the bilateral talks and the Palestinian deportees problem. He added that they also discussed the need for rallying Arab solidarity to deal with this issue effectively and to preempt new measures of this kind.

Buwayz noted that the peace process needs new impetus and activity following its recent slackness as a result of the deportees problem. He emphasized that resuming the negotiations routinely as if nothing has happened is difficult. He expected Washington to put forth its view on the negotiations issue, saying: We will see the new

U.S. Administration's view and role in the peace negotiations and to what extent it will be an impartial mediator.

He said that what is required is serious international justice, because the region's nations feel that there is immense disorder in how international and regional crises are dealt with, that there are resolutions designed for application and others for appeasement, that there are countries above international law and others below it, and that the United Nations has begun to lose its role as an authority on justice and international legitimacy.

On his visit to Tehran, he said many old and new files will be discussed during the visit. He added: Iran has an undeniable regional presence, and therefore we will discuss with them the regional situation—especially matters relating to the Palestinian issue, the situation in south Lebanon, and several bilateral issues that need thorough and serious discussion.

Turkish Prime Minister Concludes Visit

Talks With al-Asad

JN1901222693 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel resumed talks at 1930 today in a closed session held at the People's Palace.

The talks in the three meetings held between the two sides dealt with bilateral relations and ways of developing them in all spheres and implementing agreements between the two countries. It was agreed that the appropriate ministers of both countries will meet to discuss joint issues, in a spirit of concern and respect for joint interests.

Regional developments were discussed, and both sides stressed the need to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the states of the region.

Holds News Conference

TA1901193493 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Report by Damascus correspondent Mesut Ertugay]

[Text] Prime Minister Demirel held a news conference at 1730 today. He stressed that Turkey attaches great importance to the improvement of relations between the two brotherly and neighborly countries, which have a common border of close to 900 km and a common history. He pointed out that Turkey and Syria are two countries whose contributions to regional stability cannot be underestimated. He said that efforts are being made to eliminate certain old prejudices, misunderstandings, and mistrust. Such high- level contacts between the two countries, he said, are of great importance in eliminating these negative elements.

Demirel pointed out that the basis necessary for developing relations with Syria exists, adding that the development of political and economic relations will be in the interests of both countries.

The prime minister said that at his meeting with President al- Asad they discussed Workers Party of Kurdistan terrorism and border security. Demirel said: The honorable President al-Asad has said that Syria will not support terrorism which threatens Turkey's security. Various reports are being concocted, but Syria will never engage in activities that threaten or disturb Turkey. It is inconceivable for Syria, Turkey's neighbor and a brotherly country, to support a murderous gang which kills innocent people in Turkey every day and which martyrs Turkey's soldiers and policemen. That is what the honorable president said. I am pleased that President al-Asad made such a statement.

Demirel said that another issue they discussed with the Syrian president involved the waters of the Euphrates River. The prime minister noted that this issue has been discussed for the past 40 to 50 years. There are no problems at the moment, he said, adding that Turkey releases the waters of the Euphrates after collecting them in [word indistinct]. Nor is there any need to worry about this in the future, he added.

Demirel said that the developments in Iraq were also discussed at the meeting. He pointed out that Iraq must protect its own territorial integrity, yet it engaged in a renewed confrontation with the world. We are opposed to attacking civilians or civilian targets in Iraq, he said, adding that the regional countries, namely Turkey, Iran, and Syria, are concerned about the attitude of the Baghdad administration.

Demirel explained that as a result of the Iraqi Administration's intransigent attitude, the UN Security Council adopted certain resolutions and that Poised Hammer was the creation of one of these resolutions. He stressed that in addition to Turkey, Iran and Syria are also opposed to the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq. The Syrian president agrees, he said, that the establishment of such a state would disturb not only these three countries but also the entire Middle East.

The prime minister said that he told al-Asad that he condemns Israel's refusal to take back the deported Palestinians.

Demirel added that he told the Syrian president of his concern and ideas about the issues of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Nagorno- Karabakh.

Further Report

JN1901221393 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1750 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Damascus, 19 Jan (SANA)—Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel held a news conference this evening at the Sheraton Hotel in Damascus. The conference was attended by correspondents from Arab and foreign news agencies, world television networks, the Turkish media accompanying Demirel, as well as other newsmen.

At the outset, Demirel thanked President Hafiz al-Asad and Syrian officials for the hospitality he and his delegation were accorded in Damascus.

He added: We were honored to meet with President Hafiz al-Asad. We held a first round of talks, and also visited the Umayyad Mosque and the tomb of Salah-al-Din.

Demirel went on to say: During the talks, we emphasized that Syria and Turkey carry weight in the region and enjoy security and stability, and that promoting ties between them contributes effectively toward maintaining their stability and achieving peace in the region.

He noted that exchanging visits between officials of the two countries helps to remove the ambiguity surrounding some issues and gives an opportunity to hold consultations and explore avenues for cooperation between the two states.

He added: We discussed economic cooperation between Syria and Turkey and increasing trade between them to $1 billion. We also discussed some difficulties obstructing this prospect, such as means of transportation and communications. We also reviewed joint investments and linking electricity grids between the two countries, as well as exchanging scientific expertise, university professors, lecturers, and scholarships.

Demirel affirmed that the two sides had identical views on various issues.

Demirel said: The two sides have emphasized their desire to have good neighborly relations and to respect mutual interests.

He added: We discussed the subject of sharing Euphrates River water emanating from the importance of this subject to the three countries—Syria, Turkey, and Iraq—stressing that Turkey will not take a position that harms the interests of its neighbors, and will respect the Syrian and Iraqi interests in this respect.

Demirel pointed out: The talks dealt with the situation in Iraq and Bosnia-Hercegovina where we stressed anew our concern for maintaining Iraq's unity and its territorial integrity, and for the return of the Palestinian deportees to their homeland. He said that the assistant to Turkish prime minister has previously discussed this subject with the Israelis.

Answering a question on the latest allied raids on Iraq, Demirel said: Iraqi civilians and Iraqi territorial integrity should be protected.

Answering another question if he thinks that there is a double standard policy in the application of UN resolutions, particularly concerning the Arab territories that Israel is occupying, and the subject of deportees, Demirel said: We are sorry for the deportees, and we consider the implementation of UN resolutions a responsibility of the whole world.

Answering a question on the possibility of establishment of a state in northern Iraq, Demirel said: The establishment of such a state concerns Turkey, Syria, and Iran, and if such a state is established it will be a source of danger, not only to the three countries but to the Middle East region.

Meets With al-Zu'bi

JN2001183593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Damascus—Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel and his delegation at 1600 today. Faruq al-Shar', minister of foreign affairs, and Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, attended the meeting. The outcome of the Syrian-Turkish talks were discussed during the meeting.

Demirel and his delegation left Damascus this evening following a two-day visit to Syria. [passage omitted]

Communique Issued

JN2001211993 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Official Syrian-Turkish talks led by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi and Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel concluded at 1630 at the Prime Ministry today. [passage omitted]

At the outset of the session al-Zu'b welcomed Demirel and his delegation. The prime minister said Syria and Turkey have a great deal in common, and called for their brotherly and friendly relations to be further cemented. Syrian-Turkish cooperation will have positive repercussions for the region and the world, as well as for the two countries. This is especially so, added al-Zu'bi, given that breaking international developments have underscored the importance of our bilateral cooperation for peace and security.

We are glad to note that relations between our two countries have been making headway over the past few years in all areas, and we sincerely hope they will be enhanced still further. Al-Zu'bi noted that exhaustive and thorough discussions were held between the Turkish guests and President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday, and that we ourselves have had useful and fruitful talks.

Demirel expressed his and his delegation's gratitude for the warm reception and hospitality accorded them in Syria. The Turkish prime minister said he was pleased with the meeting and talks he had with President al-Asad about ways to deepen and consolidate ties between the two brotherly and friendly countries. There is the political will in Turkey, he stated, to develop its relations with Syria, a friendly and neighboring state, in all spheres. Demirel emphasized that the near future should witness a new push to develop and deepen these ties so as to advance the joint aim of serving the ambitions of our two peoples. He concluded by saying that world developments dictate that we reinforce our friendship and step up our cooperation to advance bilateral interests and firm up regional stability, peace, and security. He stressed that Turkey will never do anything to the detriment of Syria—a friend and neighbor. On behalf of the Turkish president and government, Demirel renewed an invitation for President Hafiz al-Asad to visit Turkey and expressed the hope that he would accept the offer. He also invited Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi to visit Turkey.

In this session, the two sides reviewed the progress of the bilateral talks on all fronts. They also went over what the two sides have agreed on in terms of giving a boost to bilateral ties and issues of common interest.

Afterward, Prime Minister al-Zu'bi and Turkey's Demirel signed the joint communique with the delegates from both sides in attendance.

The communique expressed mutual satisfaction over the rapid and positive development in bilateral ties, stressing that this should promote not only their joint interests, but regional peace and stability. Building on a common heritage and culture, they expressed their determination to consolidate all aspects of the bilateral relations. The two sides stated their satisfaction over the positive developments regarding the security along their common borders which has been made possible by a spirit of cooperation and exchanges of official visits. They reiterated their resolve not to sanction any activity on their respective territories that could prove detrimental to the security of the other side.

On the question of the Euphrates water, the two sides agreed to work out a final solution by the end of 1993, whereby quotas of the river's waters are allocated to all sides. This is pursuant to the protocol signed between the Syrian and Turkish Governments in 1987. The Syrian and Turkish foreign ministers have been asked to follow this matter.

The two sides have also underlined the need to broaden the scope of contacts and consultations in all spheres, hoping their cooperation will be further developed in the areas of the media and consular relations. They expressed a common desire for each country to set up a cultural center in the other as soon as possible, and noted the need for consolidating cooperation between Syrian and Turkish universities. They agreed to boost the volume of their annual trade to $1 billion and to promote two-way travel and tourism, to explore avenues for increased cooperation between the chambers of commerce and industry and between the private sectors in the two countries, to upgrade transport facilities, and to promote joint ventures and bilateral investment and cooperation in the areas of electricity networks and the production of natural gas and oil.

On the political front, the two sides condemned Israel's expulsion of over 400 Palestinians from the occupied territories and demanded the enforcement of UN Security Council Resolution 799 and called for international legitimacy to be grounded in justice and equality. They stressed the importance both attach to keeping the Middle East peace process going on the basis of Resolutions 338 and 442. The two sides expressed their disquiet over the continuing Iraqi Government's policies that are proving detrimental to the Iraqi people and are clashing with UN resolutions. They stressed the importance of the civilian population in Iraq being spared in the process of implementing Security Council resolutions. The two sides also underscored the need to preserve the territorial integrity of Iraq. They exchanged views about Bosnia-Hercogovina, the dispute over Nagorno-Karabach, and the Caucusus. They appealed to the international community's sense of justice and equality insofar as the enforcement of UN resolutions over Bosnia-Hercegovina is concerned. [passage omitted]

AL-BA'TH Editorial

JN2101082493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Jan 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial today, the newspaper AL-BA'TH writes about Syrian-Turkish relations and their course, which is dominated by a spirit of concern and interest in improving them.

The paper says: Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's visit and talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and a number of Syrian officials came to bolster this course and underline an appropriate method to entrench cooperation and remove obstacles in this or that aspect, obstacles which are, sometimes, inherited from the past.

AL-BA'TH says: Syria has always been eager to maintain good relations with our neighbor Turkey. This is not said as a customary diplomatic courtesy. In light of the current international conditions, this is particularly important because such relations are in the interest of both countries, in the interest of good relations between the Arabs and Turkey, and in the interest of security and stability in the entire region.

The paper points out that Syria always asserts the need to maintain good relations with Turkey. This assertion is based on a genuine and common interest in the well-being of the Syrian and Turkish peoples.

The paper says: Although we have no control over the past, with its bright and dark sides, we still have the future. We can shape it as we wish, in accordance with the objectives we seek to achieve.

Al-BA'TH adds: When there are good intentions and mutual, sincere confidence, Syria and Turkey will undoubtedly find many common factors that can provide a good base for the improvement of relations to yield the best fruit for the two peoples and countries.

The paper concludes by saying: Syria sees the common history of the Syrian and Turkish peoples, who have historic links and a shared religious and cultural heritage, as a good basis for building the best and strongest relations. Good intentions will help the two countries tackle all bilateral issues, regardless of how difficult they may be, and achieve results that serve the interests of the two sides, as well as the interests of peace, stability, and regional development.

Talks Held Following Iran Joint Commission Session

LD1901123793 Tehran IRNA in English 1214 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Damascus, Jan. 19, IRNA—Iran and Syria Monday explored avenues to follow up decisions made at the recent session of Irano-Syria Joint Commission, held in Tehran early this month.

The talks were held between Iran's Ambassador to Syria Hojjat ol- Eslam Mohammad Hasan Akhtari and Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, here Monday.

Khaddam made a three-day visit to Tehran January 3 at the head of a high-ranking delegation and handed over a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to his Iranian counterpart 'Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

In a separate meeting with Syria's Minister of Justice Abdallah Tulbah on Monday, the Iranian diplomat said that despite American and Zionist attempts to mar Tehran-Damascus ties, the two countries enjoyed "very good" relations.

Calling for further mutual cooperation, Tulbah noted that the current world situation proved that there was a "calculated plot" underway to annihilate potentials of the Muslim world.

Meanwhile, Akhtari submitted an invitation from Iran's Justice Minister 'Ali Shushtari to his Syrian counterpart to visit Iran which was accepted by the Syrian official.

Security Council 'Collusion' With Israel Noted

JN2101095393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Jan 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In an editorial today under the headline "A Return to the UN Security Council," TISHRIN writes on UN envoy Chinmaya Gharekhan's mission to implement UN Resolution 799 calling on Israel to return the Palestinian deportees to their homes.

The paper refers to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's refusal to accept that resolution. The paper says his position is no different from those of other Israeli rulers, who have aborted each and every UN Security Council resolution since 1948.

TISHRIN reviews the series of Israeli acts contradicting UN resolutions, and its obstinacy during the peace talks. The paper also refers to Israel's ceaseless attempts to prevent Arabs from acquiring arms, while Westerners consider Israel the fifth nuclear power in the world with some 200 nuclear warheads.

The paper asserts that the only threat facing the Middle East comes from Israel. It notes the collusion of influential states in the UN Security Council with Israel.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: The continuation of this situation will lead to the exacerbation of the Middle East conflict and the collapse of the peace process. The Arabs have explained that the policy of double standards is no longer acceptable. Returning the Palestinian deportees to their homes will provide the Westerners with an initial step along the correct path to restoring their credibility, that is if they in fact really care about this credibility.

Afghanistan

Reportage on Continued Fighting in Kabul

Army Suffers 'Heavy Losses'

BK2001004093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1501 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Report by Terence White]

[Text] Kabul, Jan 19 (AFP)—A hardline Pashtun Mojahedin group pounded the Afghan capital with around 200 rockets Tuesday, killing at least eight civilians and damaging government buildings in the city centre.

The rocket barrage came as the Hezb-e-Eslami faction of fundamentalist leader Golboddin Hekmatyar inflicted heavy losses on government forces in a battle on the eastern outskirts of Kabul.

But the government later launched a counterattack against Hezb positions in the southeast of the city using helicopter gunships in an attempt to knock out the faction's heavy weapons, witnesses said.

Government troops also took over several Hezb positions in the Pol-e-Charki area, the witnesses said.

At least 33 civilians were admitted to hospital and eight died, a hospital source said after the rocket attack, during which around 200 long-range missiles hit the city according to a government official.

"Casualties are lower than expected because the majority of the rockets were fired early in the morning, allowing many people to stay indoors," a doctor at the former Red Cross hospital said, adding that most of the rockets were targetted at military installations.

At least four missiles landed near the Defence Ministry, while others ripped into the street outside the presidential palace, smashing some of the massive plane trees that line the avenue into kindling.

Government troops battled with the ethnic Pashtun Hezb about two kilometres (more than a mile) along the road towards Pakistan but suffered large numbers of casualties due to a lack of tank support.

Many soldiers had lost their boots and were walking barefoot in the snow as they fled the battle while others were soaked from the waist down after wading through the freezing Kabul River.

Several anti-tank rockets chased the retreating soldiers along the main road, some exploding in the air, others bursting in the snow, sending out shrapnel and black plumes of smoke.

Machinegun fire forced stragglers face-down into the snow as officers tried to direct their men into their headquarters to recover by the stoves.

"What good to me is your heater? I have lost all my closest friends. Their bodies are left out there on the battlefield," cried one bedraggled soldier.

"We have taken too many casualties. Why didn't our tanks give us any support," shouted another.

Most of the men were too weak to speak and were suffering from exhaustion and hypothermia.

Meanwhile the two Russian-made T-62 support tanks, which had lain idle, began firing salvoes towards the Hezb positions.

A angry, snow-sodden officer supporting a wounded soldier attacked this correspondent and his interpreter with his rifle butt.

"Why are you here? You westerners have destroyed our country. Get out of here or else we will shoot you!" he screamed.

Discarded shell casings piled up beside the tanks, while public transport buses flew by, still chancing the road out of town.

Defence Ministry troops provided some covering fire from batteries around the perimeter of Kabul airport but the city took a worse pounding from the incoming missiles that struck in the centre and in the diplomatic enclave of Wazir Akbar Khan.

The Hezb has been bitterly opposed to the Afghan government led by President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Defence Minister Ahmed Shah Mas'ud, ethnic Tajiks from the north of the country.

Since the Mojahedin won their jihad, or holy war, to oust the former Soviet-backed regime of president Najibollah, the various ethnic and religious groups have fought each other for power, devastating the capital and forcing tens of thousands to flee.

Rabbani was elected president by a gathering of representatives last month although several Mojahedin groups, including the Hezb, have refused to recognise the new government.

Kabul Suffers Rocket Attack

LD2001151293 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1330 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Civilian areas of Kabul city became the target of rocket attacks by Golboddin's forces today. A responsible security source told BAKHTAR'S military section that today's barrage of 23 rockets was fired into districts 2 and 10 from a southerly direction. Fortunately there was no loss of life but heavy financial loss was inflicted on the residents of Kabul City.

Government Troops Attack Hekmatyar Forces

LD2001153393 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1330 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Military mopping-up operations aimed at eliminating the positions from which the enemy is firing rockets into the city of Kabul are continuing today.

A responsible source of the Afghan Defense Ministry told the military correspondent of the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY [BIA]: In order to prevent the enemy from subjecting the residents of Kabul to rocket attacks, troops of the Afghan Defense Ministry today launched heavy artillery and air strikes against the enemy's heavy weapons and rocket positions in Bagrami and Charasiab. The fundamental aim of the operation is to destroy the enemy's fire power. During recent days [words indistinct], rockets were fired into the city from those places.

The source said heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy's positions, and a large number of elements of Golboddin [Hekmatyar] were eliminated.

A responsible source of the Afghan Defense Ministry told a correspondent of the BIA's military section that Golboddin's forces yesterday subjected the city of Kabul and government army's positions to rocket fire, in line with its previous ultimatum.

The army of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, which is protecting our national interests, received an order to prevent the offensives by Golboddin's forces. Therefore, yesterday morning it started mopping-up operations toward Hodkhil, Deh-e Khodaidad, Bagrami, Tangi Botkhak, Khak-e Jabar, and the hills of Shina and Kamari. The government forces cleared these areas of Golboddin's forces. In the process, they captured eight sets of BM 21's, one set of [word indistinct], two DC 13 antitank guns, 15 tanks, two BM-40 [word indistinct], some antiaircraft batteries, three [word indistinct] guns, and various types of heavy and light weapons. In addition, dozens of the enemy were captured and others driven from the battlefield.

The responsible source of the Afghan Defense Ministry added that the operations proceeded successfully, and that Golboddin's forces, which over the past two weeks have fired rockets from those areas, have been pushed back.

During the mopping-up operation, two mojaheds of the Afghan Islamic Army were injured.

Government Forces Retake Strategic Hill

LD2001174793 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] An Afghan Government spokesman announced today that government forces have recaptured the strategic hill of Shamir [as heard] and have captured the majority of the ammunition and artillery belonging to Hekmatyar's Islamic Party [Hezb-e Eslami].

According to a Central News Unit report, this takes place at a time after the heavy artillery fire and missile attacks on Kabul stopped a few hours ago which is a sign of the government forces' success.

More than 30 missiles were fired at the Afghan capital yesterday, killing at least 12 and injuring 25.

Kabul Residents Flee Fresh Fighting

LD2101115293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Early this morning forces of Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami launched an attack on government forces' positions in the Chehelsotun and Dar ol-Aman districts, southwest of Kabul. This followed an attack on Hezb-e Eslami positions two days ago by the government forces under the command of Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud. No accurate report is available on the outcome of these attacks.

Gudarzi and Foruzanfar, the correspondents of the Voice and Vision (IRIB) and the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) report from Kabul that the scene of clash in the Dar ol-Aman Palace and Kheyrabad Hills is intensely pounded By the two sides' heavy artillery fire. In the wake of this clash the inhabitants of Deh-Afghanan and Dughabad, south-western districts of Kabul, are seen fleeing their houses towards more secure places. Conditions in the Afghan capital is tense.

Kabul television announced yesterday evening that a fighter plane of the Afghan air force bombed positions of Golboddin Hekmatyar's forces in the Bagrami and Char Asiab regions, east of Kabul. Char Asiab is one of the main concentration points of Hezb-e Eslami forces in the suburbs of Kabul. The fact that the air force planes are deployed to bomb the area demonstrates Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's determination to increase military pressure on Hekmatyar's forces. [passage omitted]

Islamic National Front Leader Eyes Premier's Post

LD1501171893 Tehran IRNA in English 1627 GMT 15 Jan 93

[Text] Islamabad, Jan. 15, IRNA—Leader of Afghanistan's 'Mahaz-e Meli-ye Eslami-ye' (Islamic National Front), Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani, told IRNA here Friday that he is ready to take the post of premier if his conditions are accepted.

He told IRNA in an interview that he will give a positive answer to President Borhannodin Rabbani only if the cabinet members are appointed through consultation between the president and the prime minister.

Gaylani added that most Afghan parties, including the Islamic National Movement led by Abdur Rashid Dostom, must take part in his cabinet and that satisfaction of all parties must be sought.

He also said that the limits of the authority of the prime minister must be defined, and once those conditions are met, he will cooperate with the Islamic Government of Afghanistan.

According to Gaylani President Rabbani has been informed of his conditions but has not given any answer yet.

Islamic Unity Party Calls Government 'Illegitimate'

LD1701185293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] The political secretary of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) and the UN secretary general's special envoy have met with Mr. Mazari, the secretary general of the Islamic Unity Party [Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami] in Kabul. They discussed the latest developments and political situation in Afghanistan.

At the meeting, Mr. Mazari described the Afghan Government as illegitimate, and called for ways of involving the Afghan people and its mojahedin and political parties in the country's administration. He also called for the return of power to the Leadership Council and the election of a representative of Afghan women to the Resolution and Settlement Council.

Bangladesh

Parliament Resolution Condemns Babri Mosque Situation

BK2001171293 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Parliament has adopted a resolution condemning the demolition of the historic Babri Mosque at India's Ayodhya. In a four-point resolution adopted at the end of a four-day debate tonight, the House said it sees the construction of a Hindu temple at the site of the demolished historic mosque as a shameful and disgraceful incident unprecedented in history. This demolition hurt the religious feelings and beliefs of the world Muslims and the feelings of all citizens of Bangladesh. The House unequivocally and in strictest words condemns the incident and the people involved in it. The House firmly believes that communal amity, peace, and stability in India will be restored in India only with the reconstruction of the Babri Mosque at its original site as announced by the Indian prime minister. The House called for early implementation of this.

The House expressed its deep concern at the communal riots in India following demolition of the nearly 500-year-old Babri Mosque and called upon the Government of India to maintain communal harmony, ensure the safety of life and property of minorities, and take all steps to rehabilitate all those affected in India. The House also noted that Bangladesh has set an example of communal harmony through the appropriate steps taken by the government and due to the extreme patience and tolerance shown by its people in the face of the demolition of the Babri Mosque. It congratulated the people and the government on the immediate preventive steps they took against the miscreants and provocation by (?identified) quarters and called for alertness in the future. Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali put to a vote all the eight resolutions moved in the House for adoption. The four-point resolution moved by acting deputy leader of the House, M. Majedul Haq, was adopted by a voice vote, while a new resolution put forward by opposition leader Sheikh Hasina was not adopted.

Winding up the discussion, M. Majedul Haq, the acting leader of the House who is also minister for irrigation, water development and flood control, termed the destruction of the Babri Mosque part of the global conspiracy against the Muslims. The incident is a black chapter in world civilization which has hurt the consciences and religious values of all people. Rejecting the opposition allegation of the failure of the government to protect the interests of the citizens, he said that due to prompt action by the government the communal forces in the country could not raise their heads.

In her speech, leader of the opposition Sheikh Hasina condemned the demolition of the Babri Mosque and demanded its reconstruction. She said that being the religion of peace, Islam does not sanction any breach of peace. She alleged that the government did not take prompt action to contain the reaction to the destruction of the ancient mosque. She congratulated the people on their alertness and on preventing any further deterioration in the law and order situation in the country.

Abdus Salam Talukder, the local government, rural development and cooperatives minister, condemned the demolition of the historic mosque and said the act does not constitute the destruction of a religious institution alone, but is a severe blow to the religious feelings of every Muslim. It has bewildered the entire world's conscience. Maudud Ahmed of the Jatiya Party called for narrowing of the differences between the opposition and ruling party on the issue. He said nothing has happened in Bangladesh which can be termed interference in India's internal affairs and which can be a reason for postponement of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit in Dhaka for the second time.

Speaking during a morning session, Dr. Khondaker Mosharraf Hossain, energy and mineral resources minister, said that with the demolition of the Babri Mosque, the Hindus of India have shattered the three pillars of their country's Constitution—democracy, rule of law, and secularism. Quoting from the Bangladeshi Constitution and the International Human Rights Charter, Information Minister Najmul Huda said the people of Bangladesh have the right to highlight the plight of the Indian Muslims. He contradicted certain exaggerated reports presented by some opposition members in parliament.

Nurual Huda, state minister for establishment, focusing on the history of Ayodhya, said there is no historical and archaeological proof of the birth of Ram at the site of the Babri Mosque. Abdus Samad Azad, deputy leader of the opposition, demanded the banning of the politics of communalism. He said the government should take responsibility for maintaining law and order and protecting members of other communities in the country. Matiur Rahman Mizani, leader of the Jamaat-i-Islami parliamentary party, said the Babri Mosque incident is not an isolated one. Rather, he said, it is a part of the deep-rooted Indian conspiracy to crush Muslims in the subcontinent.

Opposition chief whip Mohammad Mohsin criticized the government for its alleged failure to take adequate steps to prevents outbreaks of violence in Bangladesh in the wake of demolition of the Babri Mosque in India. Tufail Ahmad of the Awami League reiterated his proposal for setting up a special parliamentary committee headed by the speaker to investigate the violent incidents in several parts of the country. The house will meet again tomorrow at 1600.

Diplomats View SAARC Summit Postponement, Future

BK2001111993 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 10 Jan 93 p 1

[Report by Hassan Shaharyar]

[Text] The postponement of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC] summit for the second time without fixing a new date for the meeting has created an uncertainty which is leading this organization toward a deep crisis. Officials are optimistic SAARC will be able to overcome this problem, as in the past. However, everything depends on India. Diplomats believe that the unwillingness of leaders to attend previous summits for identical reasons poses a threat to the existence of this organization. But officials have said that the achievements of SAARC in various fields have been possible only by virtue of mutual cooperation between member-countries. So far, SAARC has initiated a move to increase cooperation in 14 spheres, and member-states have also agreed on setting up two institutions. Progress has also been achieved in efforts to set up a South Asian Regional Fund and a South Asian Development Fund. Apart from this, member-countries have also reached a consensus on expansion of preferential trade ties.

Critics say that similar incidents took place in the past and the leaders were able to overcome these crises by sorting out their differences. They believe that all quarters have expressed doubts about the solution of the problems that led the Indian prime minister to cancel his visit to Dhaka. As a result, officials have not been very enthusiastic about the prospects of convening the SAARC summit. It is similar to what was seen during the Colombo summit.

SAARC was formed with a view to expanding cooperative relations between countries of this subcontinent. Bilateral issues were not included in its charter. Diplomats insist that this organization will become ineffective one day if this lack of confidence among the member-countries continues.

Except India, the other SAARC member-countries do not have common borders with other members. But India's bilateral ties with the majority of the SAARC member-states are not cordial. Pakistan and India have fought three wars. Aside from this, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka also have several outstanding disputes with India. There are religious differences as well, which have come to the fore following the demolition of the Babri Mosque. Officials are optimistic that the SAARC summit will take place, although a bit late. They believe that India desires to make SAARC more dynamic. But, whether New Delhi desires to do so will be borne out by the steps it will take in the days to come.

Minister To Discuss Burmese Refugees With UN Chief

BK2001132093 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman has stressed the need for accelerating the repatriation of Burmese refugees. These refugees are causing strain on Bangladesh's economy. The foreign minister said this in Dhaka before leaving for London today. The Bangladeshi foreign minister will leave London for New York to hold talks with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus Ghali on the issue. The primary objective of his visit is to discuss how best the refugees can be repatriated in the shortest possible time. Mustafizur Rahman has requested the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to expedite the repatriation work.

India

Congress-I Decries BJP Agitation for Midterm Polls

BK1901161093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] The Congress-I today strongly criticized the call given by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, for direct action to get the Lok Sabha dissolved and to have midterm polls. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the Congress-I spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said these provocative statements would threaten the very basis of our democracy. Mr. Gadgil expressed the hope that all secular forces would unitedly fight such a threat. Replying to a question, the Congress-I spokesman said his party is still willing to form a joint front to fight communal forces and said this should be on equal terms.

Portfolios of 3 New Ministers Announced

BK2001041893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Mr. K.P. Singh Deo is the new minister of state for information and broadcasting with independent charge. The portfolios of three other ministers of state who were sworn in yesterday evening have been announced. According to a Rashtrapati Bhavan communique, Mr. P.M. Sayeed is minister of state in the ministry of home affairs, Mrs. Vasava Rajeshwari has been allotted the department of women and child welfare in the ministry of human resource development, Mr. K.V. Thangabalu has been made minister of state in the ministry of welfare. Earlier, the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, administered the oath of office and secrecy to them at a simple function.

Four Persons Killed in Gujarat Yesterday

BK2001042293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] In Gujarat, four persons were killed and 15 injured in violent incidents in Surat yesterday. An indefinite curfew has been imposed in Akbar Line area. A BSF [Border Security Force] company has been deployed in Surat to assist the local police in maintaining law and order. In Ahmedabad, curfew is being relaxed in all parts of the city in a phased manner today.

President, Prime Minister Greet President Clinton

BK2001163493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The president and the prime minister have felicitated Mr. Bill Clinton on his assuming [office] as the President of the United States later today. In his message, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma said he is confident that the friendly relations between India and the United States will prosper and expand under Mr. Clinton's presidency.

Mr. Narasimha Rao said the two countries can work together in building an enduring relationship founded on shared responsibility and mutual trust. He told the new American President that he shares his belief that the world stands on the threshold of a promising new era.

The external affairs minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, has sent a message of felicitations to the U.S. secretary of state-designate, Mr. Warren Christopher.

Commentary Hopes for Expansion of Ties in Clinton Tenure

BK2101034693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Commentary by foreign affairs commentator Professor M.S. Venkataramani]

[Text] Mr. Bill Clinton has been sworn in as President of the United States of America, bringing the Democrats back into the White House after 12 years. The people of India extend their greetings to the youthful president of the great democracy of the New World. They wish him success in his efforts to move his country forward and to steer it to play a worthy role in the evolution of an equitable world order.

The smoothness and cordiality that marked the transfer of power in Washington have brought home to countries around the globe a clear awareness that the replacement of a Republican president by a Democrat would not signify any violent shifts in America's cause. On basic issues relating to safeguarding the country's political processes, its economic system and its position in international affairs, no serious differences exist between the Republican and Democratic parties. This is reflection of the broad consensus on fundamentals that exist among the American people. This factor is an important source of America's vitality and strength. Nonetheless, there is an air of high expectancy among the American people which is accompanied by nagging anxieties about the longevity and durability of America's position as a dominant power in the world. Mr. Clinton correctly assessed the anxieties of the American people in implementing his astute campaign strategy. Sidelining foreign affairs, he spoke eloquently of the steps he would take to revitalize the economy, promote growth and competitiveness, create new jobs and ensure equitable distribution of the fruits of growth. Fulfilling many of the camaign promises will be a daunting task despite the fact that the Democratic Party controls both houses of Congress.

There is nothing in Mr. Clinton's past records, recent pronouncements or present associations to indicate any negative sentiments toward our country. Some positive aspects are indeed discernible. There is, thus, room for hoping that the man from Hope, Arkansas, may move constructively to strengthen friendly cooperation between his country and the second most populous country in the world, which too is committed to freedom, democracy, representative government and peace.

Finance Minister Meets Russian First Deputy Premier

BK2001150893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The Russian first deputy prime minister, Mr. Vladimir Shumeyko, and the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, today discussed the economic relations between the two countries, particularly the terms of reference for settling past debts. Mr. Shumeyko is presently on a visit to New Delhi, heading a delegation of various departments. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman told newsmen that Mr. Shumeyko and Dr. Singh have already held two sessions with the agenda covering the entire gamut of relations between the two countries. The discussions, which will continue, also include measures to strengthen the fiscal and economic bases for future cooperation.

Pakistan Demand To Cut Consulate Staff in Karachi Viewed

BK2001124393 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 8 Jan 93 p 11

[By Manvedra Singh: "Karachi consulate: dispute over people"]

[Text] New Delhi—It is in India's national interest to maintain the staff level at the Karachi consulate at current strength. The directive from Government of Pakistan, with a January 31 deadline, to prune the number of diplomatic and non-diplomatic staff to 20 (currently at 62) must not be complied with. This is the opinion held by many informed of security problems confronting India.

Debunking Islamabad's official statement seeking a parity between Pakistan's consulate in Bombay, and that of India's in Karachi, intelligence sources believe the reality to be something rather different. Pakistan's interest in curtailing the productivity of the Indian consulate in Karachi is linked to developments in Uttar Pradesh, or lack thereof. A large majority of visas to India are serviced by the Karachi consulate, and the destination of most are towns in Uttar Pradesh.

And it is in this vital, and vulnerable, state that the future efforts of Pakistan's intelligence agencies are likely to be focused. With conditions in Punjab favouring the security forces, a number of Khalistani groups have shifted their activities to the Terai region. Skirting the Terai are three critically important urban centres—Bareilly, Moradabad and Rampur. The next stage of Pakistani intelligence agencies offensive is expected in this area: by coupling the Khalistan movement with aggrieved Muslims of the three towns. Following the demolition at Ayodhya, Pakistan believes an opportunity exists for initiating a campaign of terror in this part of Uttar Pradesh.

The impediment, however, lies in the hundreds of Indian visas issued by the consulate at Karachi. Mohajirs living in Sindh are largely from towns and villages in Uttar Pradesh, and frequent travellers to India. Until the military crackdown on the Mohajir Quami Mahaz (MQM) last year, the news from Karachi received by the relatives in townships of Uttar Pradesh was quite positive. They were still enamoured of conditions in Pakistan, but no more. And this is most telling from the significantly lower level of violence in these impressionable towns following Ayodhya December 6.

Punjab and the Ayodhya fallout in Uttar Pradesh has thrown Pakistan's plans out of gear. As current conditions indicate, all intelligence projections are unlikely to achieve much headway. Therefore, to overcome the setback it is essential for Pakistan to clamp down on human contacts. In South Asia, the effect of government propaganda has been considerable. The only counter, and an infallible one at that, is continuing communication between those related on either side of the border. Information passed by human contact is most always taken as accurate. And as conditions in Sindh worsened, the charm of Pakistan dwindled amongst those living in townships of the Ganges belt.

The combination of Punja militants operating from the Terai, and Muslims inflamed by Ayodhya, was an intelligence operatives' dream. The potential was, (still is?) devastating, but for the MQM voters who obtain Indian visas. They bring with them disheartening tales of happenings in Sindh and the rest of Pakistan, and hardly likely to inspire sabotage for the cause of religion. Whilst preempting the emergence of this conspiracy, India must also ensure that visas are issued at the same levels from the consulate in Karachi. In the next stage of the continuing battle between the respective intelligence agencies, every contribution is consequential. Information passed through people-to-people contacts can only strengthen India's hands.

Commentary Previews Visit by Britain's John Major

BK2001114193 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Commentary by columnist Manoharlal Chug]

[Text] The presence of British Prime Minister Mr. John Major as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations will not only highlight the old relationship between the two countries, but would also herald a new era of cordial relations. The British prime minister's visit from 23 to 28 January will certainly bring the two countries closer. The British presence at the Republic Day goes back to 1961 when Queen Elizabeth had accompanied president Rajendra Prasad to the parade at the Republic Day celebrations. Margaret Thatcher was the last prime minister who had paid official visit to New Delhi in 1983. In fact, she had also come in 1984 for the funeral of the then prime minister, Indira Gandhi, with whom she had a personal rapport.

New dimensions in bilateral relationship began to emerge in the last couple of years after the collapse of bipolarism which had frozen the international situation for over 40 years. There have been a record number of visits between the dignitaries of the two countries. The British foreign minister, Douglas Hurd, visited New Delhi in January last year. During his visit, it was decided that there should be regular bilateral dialogue at all levels to promote greater interaction and mutual understanding. Following this, a number of visits were exchanged between the two countries. British Home Minister Kenneth Baker, Overseas Development Minister Linda Chalker, State Secretary Charles Wardle were among those who visited India one after another. The British royal visits were always indicative of the warmth in the relationship between the two countries. Prince of Wales and Princess Anne's visits to India further added to the warmth of the relationship and further contributed to the understanding between the two countries. Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Home Minister S.B. Chavan's return visits to Britain were of great significance. They reflect Mr. Narasimha Rao's government's efforts for closer ties with the West, particularly in the economic field.

While the international thaw and various foreign policy compulsions may have given an impetus to present Indo-British relations, at their heart lies the question of how Britain deals with anti-India terrorist activity from its soil. This affects the situation in Punjab and Kashmir and the security of India as a whole. The extradition treaty and confiscation agreement between India and Britain signed in September last year reflects a new close identity of views and (?perceived) needs for expanding bilateral cooperation to curb terrorist activities. The historic nature of the two agreements can be judged from the fact that India is the first commonwealth country with which Britain has signed an extradition treaty. Similarly, the confiscation agreement is the first of its kind covering terrorism as well as drug trafficking, which Britain has signed with any country. It is a clear signal that terrorists from India cannot now expect any asylum or toleration in Britain. Britain's attitude on Punjab and Kashmir has also been praiseworthy. Various British leaders have asked Pakistan not to export terrorism to India and also to solve Kashmir problem across the table under the provision of the Simla agreement.

Britain is already India's fifth largest trading partner and the second largest in Europe with the 6.4 percent share of India's global trade. It is keen to improve this position and a significant entourage of 17 top British business leaders will accompany Prime Minister Major during his trip. The group will include the chiefs of important financial and industrial corporations, like ICI, BAT, British Aerospace, Rolls Royce, and a host of others to inject a substantial economic input into the visit. The businessmen will stay back to follow up their discussions after Mr. Major leaves New Delhi. This will give a new sense of partnership to both the countries.

Remaining 4 Ministers of State Sworn in 19 Jan

BK1901163293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Four ministers of state, who could not take the oath on Sunday, were sworn in at Rashtrapati Bhavan this evening. The ministers are Mr. K.P. Singh Deo, Mr. P.M. Sayeed, Mrs. Vasava Rajeshwari, and Mr. K.V. Thangabalu. The president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, administered the oath of office and secrecy to them. Mr. K.P. Singh Deo was sworn in as minister of state with independent charge. The vice president, Mr. K.R. Narayanan; the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao; his cabinet colleagues; and the former president, Giani Zail Singh, were present on the occasion. The portfolios of the four ministers are expected to be announced later today.

The new ministers, who were sworn in on Sunday, assumed office today and held discussions with senior officials of their ministries. The ministers whose portfolios were changed in the reshuffle also took charge of their new assignments.

Rao Yields to Pressures for Cabinet Reshuffle

BK1801042493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Commentary by journalist M.K. Dhar]

[Text] Given the talent available in the Congress Party, it is not an easy job for a prime minister to order a drastic reshuffle of his council of ministers as the choices generally confine to members of parliament. Mr. Narasimha Rao has done some drastic surgery to chop off dead wood and, at the same time, induct new faces to fill up the vacancies that arose from time to time. He has been carrying on a heavy burden of many portfolios which had reverted to him following the resignations of Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, Mr. P. Chidambaram, and Mr. Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy.

The cabinet-level induction of three former veterans—Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, Mr. Dinesh Singh, and Mr. N.K.P. Salve—and also former Kerala Chief Minister Mr. A.K. Anthony, is meant to fill up the vacancies. Mr. Mukherjee has had a long stint as finance and commerce minister, besides being deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. Mr. Dinesh Singh is the former commerce and external affairs minister, and Mr. Salve has handled finance. They are expected to collectively lighten the prime minister's workload and give him the much-needed political support. They are themselves seasoned politicians; their considerable administrative experience being a plus point.

Mr. Rao has at last yielded to pressures to impart a new look to his cabinet which is faced with a tremendous task of meeting the challenge posed by extremist and obscurantist forces in the wake of the developments at Ayodhya. Even though he has got rid of 14 ministers of various ranks, a feeling persists that the deadwood at the top echelons has not been chopped and controversial ministers who had been threatening the prime minister with resignations and whose names have figured in controversies have been retained. This, then, does not generate the necessary confidence. However, the promotion of Mr. Salman Khurshid and Mr. Rangaiyya Naidu is well deserved. Scouting for talent at the level of ministers of state has been rewarded and those inducted certainly deserved the place in the council of ministers. Mr. Satish Sharma with his considerable political acumen has been waiting in the wings for a long time. Mr. P.M. Sayeed, Mr. Arvind Netam, and Mr. K.P. Singh Deo have been ministers earlier, whereas five ministers of state have joined the government for the first time. Regional representation has also been taken care of and the new ministers represent nearly half the states of the union. The interests of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, as also backward classes, have been met to the extent possible in a limited exercise of this nature. Among those dropped, some will become active in state politics, like Miss Mamata Banerji and Mr. Ashok Gehlot. Ultimately, the success of the prime minister's long-delayed exercise will depend on the collective performance of the new team of ministers—the manner in which they administer to the needs of the people and meet the challenges facing the country, both on the economic and political fronts.

Iran

Media Comment on Clinton's Assumption of Office

TEHRAN TIMES 'Hopes for Best'

LD2001145193 Tehran IRNA in English 1403 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 20, IRNA—The TEHRAN TIMES on Wednesday commenting on the assumption of office by new U.S. President Bill Clinton, wrote:

"Tehran waits to see how Clinton will respond to Iran. Naturally any sign of goodwill will be responded to by goodwill from the Iranian side, while hostility will be repaid by hostility. It, therefore, remains to be seen whether or not Clinton will take advantage of this golden opportunity. Let us hope for the best."

It said Clinton would be stepping into the White House at a time when the outgoing Republican administration had bequeathed to him a very serious crisis in the Persian Gulf.

"In fact America has been having problems in the Persian Gulf since 1979, and the roots of the problems must be traced to the hostile attitude towards Iran which had been adopted by the previous American leaders," noted the daily.

It further added that in view of the beliefs Clinton expressed in his presidential campaigns and assuming that Americans had elected him on the strength of those beliefs, it could be concluded that Americans had in effect rejected the policy of interference in the internal affairs of other nations and that they did not want such policies to be pursued by their leaders anymore.

"Thus Clinton can claim to represent such beliefs and ideals of the American people only when he puts an end to the irrational animosity towards certain countries including Iran," stressed the article.

Therefore, the daily commented, to end hostilities and start normal relations the first condition would be to avoid stipulating preconditions.

Speech Recalls Bush

NC2101075693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] As you have heard on the news, Bill Clinton was sworn in as the 42d U.S. President last night and started his term in office at the White House. With Clinton's election, the Democrats have returned to power after 12 years and given rise to the not very new question among political news circles: With the change of power in the United States, can perceptible changes be expected in its domestic and foreign policies?

Although the answer is negative when the change of power is viewed from the perspective of general policies, a glance at the situation in the United States shows Clinton has difficult challenges ahead. If there are no major changes in the approach to problems by U.S. leaders, undoubtedly Clinton or anyone else who enters the White House in four years will face major difficulties.

These facts and problems appear more realistic when you hear them from Clinton:

[Begin recording of portion from Clinton's inauguration speech in progress] ...Our hearts are with those on every continent who are building democracy and freedom. Their cause is America's cause. [end recording]

Referring to America's domestic situation, Clinton admitted: When Americans are working harder and getting paid less, when health care costs threaten millions, when our small and big companies are threatened by bankruptcy, when fear of crime deprives the people of freedom, and when millions of children are unable to even hope for a good life at a time when I have been elected for leadership, we have not changed. We should face these bitter realities—something we have not done so far.

Clinton expressed hopes of helping America emerge from its current crisis. Clinton's hopes of solving problems are being expressed when, in a general assessment of the domestic scene, he faces problems such as economic recession, rising crime, the production and use of drugs, expensive health services and problems in public health, a budget deficit and government debts, education problems, particularly in public education, and high military expenditure.

Abroad, Clinton has inherited the policies of 12 years of Republican rule—policies that were based on blatant claims of world leadership, especially during the past two years of Bush's rule. America's military expedition to the Persian Gulf and the destructive war that came to be known as the oil war, the futile Middle East peace talks, the passive policy on the unprecedented massacre of civilians in Bosnia-Hercegovina, the military expedition to Somalia, and the crisis that continues the oil war and has been intensified in the region during the past two weeks are all legacies that the 42d U.S. President must face.

In the election campaign, Clinton stressed that he will grant priority to solving domestic problems. Last night in his speech, Clinton warned the world: If our basic and vital interests are threatened, we will even use military force if necessary.

Threatening the world in the first speech after his inauguration makes one recall George Bush's words, especially when propounding the new world order and his solutions to various problems.

Urged To Lift Freeze on Assets

NC2101130693 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 13 Jan 93 pp 2, 15

[Editorial: "To Mr. Clinton"]

[Text] In a few days time you will be taking over the leadership of the new administration in the United States.

Your predecessor, Mr. George Bush, achieved a number of victories on the foreign policy front, including the downfall of the Eastern Superpower. But in spite of that he failed to win the wholehearted consent of the American people. And perhaps the greatest reason for his failure on the home front was his negligence of the American people's desire for fundamental changes in the internal scene as well as on the world arena.

Mr. Clinton! The era of running the world by centralist methods a-la-Brezhnev is a thing of the past. The world is now waiting to see how far you will remain faithful to your promises of change in internal affairs of your country as well as in your foreign policies.

During the past 14 years the governments of the United States adopted antagonistic approaches towards the Islamic Republic. The American acts of hostility against Iran ranged from enticing the Iraqi aggression against Iran—with the objective of overthrowing the Islamic Republic—to giving financial support and other facilities to the monarchists and other terrorist groups. But the end results of all such enmities have been nil for Washington.

The main obstacle would seem to be the American reluctance to accept the fact that the period of having an obedient, manageable person at the head of the Iranian government has passed.

The U.S. leaders have tried to justify to the American people their illogical antagonism towards Iran by attaching to this country such unseemly appellations as "terrorist-supporting-state" or "anti-human-rights-governments", which are total inversion of the truth.

Mr. Clinton! The upsurges of the Islamic aspirations in the Islamic countries are spontaneous and internal manifestations in Islamic countries, principally occasioned by the failure of the alien ideologies in those countries. Such developments are independent of what goes on in Iran, except in so far as Iran may be said to have provided the original pattern.

In fact the misrepresenting, misguiding term 'Islamic fundamentalism' is the reflection of a misconception which has perhaps been invented to cover misunderstanding or illwill towards what goes on in the Islamic communities.

It is an undeniable truth, Mr. Clinton, that our ideological differences are fundamental. But this does not mean that we intend to be at continual strife with you. A review of the process of improvement of bilateral ties between Iran and the former Soviet Union, which was effected in spite of the ideological differences, could suggest possible solutions. The first step in the process, which occurred mainly in 1986, was to avoid the aggrandizement of differences and conflicts. The leaders in Moscow had realized that the revolutionary Iran did not accept preconditions that smacked of gunboat diplomacy. As a result the two countries were able to attain, and maintain to this day, bilateral ties in spite of their ideological differences and the fact that Iran did not approve of the Red Army's presence in Afghanistan.

Iran used its spiritual influence in the Middle East to get the release of the Western hostages, and still awaits the correct response to the goodwill it exhibited in this connection.

Perhaps Mr. Clinton will show the proper appreciation of the existing conditions in the world and in the region by lifting the freezing on the Iranian assets which are being held against all international regulations.

Such an action would be a proper gesture to Iran's goodwill, and when that happens, it would then be said that the first step has been taken.

Repercussions of Iraqi Policy

NC1901201993 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1750 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] U.S., British, and French aircraft raided areas south of the 32d parallel in southern Iraq yesterday afternoon. The raids followed U.S. missile attacks against Iraq two days ago, when U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea fired more than 30 cruise missiles at Baghdad. These attacks caused damage and casualties. President George Bush, whose term ends on 20 January, said after the air raids that the Iraqi regime should understand the meaning of these attacks.

White House sources believe that this new stage of air raids and missile attacks against Iraq is a serious and firm measure through which to retaliate against the Iraqi regime's provocative actions and its refusal to comply fully with UN Security Council resolutions. Despite all these justifications for the recent military measures against Iraq—justifications that sought to secure an international and legal cover for these operations—it seems that these measures are part of President Bush's policy. This generated some opposition in Western countries, where certain political parties criticized the recent U.S. and Western operations against Iraq.

The Russian Government adopted a position that calls for examining these attacks. The Russian Government expressed deep concern over the killing of Iraqi civilians in these attacks and declared that it does not support the U.S. missile attacks against Iraq. An official Russian statement described the Western allies' attacks against Iraq to force it to implement the UN resolutions as unconstructive. In a more recent development, Moscow called on the United States not to launch air raids against Iraqi military installations without obtaining permission from the UN Security Council. Protesting the U.S.-Western military intervention in Iraq, Russian citizens called on their government to send a military force to Iraq. This Russian stand on the Western attacks against Iraq comes when a state of relative dissatisfaction prevails in the Arab countries over this new stage of U.S. and Western attacks. Under these circumstances, a number of international law experts doubt the legality of these military measures. They believe that the latest attacks and air raids took place without permission from the United Nations.

Certain political circles believe that the current escalation of the situation between Iraq and the United States is linked to a great extent with Bush's desire in his last days as President to assert U.S. military might to the world. Despite this personal motive, the repercussions of the recent events will leave a mark on the policy of new U.S. President Bill Clinton, particularly regarding Iraq. These repercussions may emerge in the next few days. Needless to say, the negative effects of the new U.S. military escalation on the region cannot be ignored. We must say that the latest U.S. military attacks against Iraq will enhance the prevalent view in the region that there is a stark double standard in the Security Council.

Velayati Interviewed on Iraqi Stikes, Other Issues

PM1901154093 Paris LE FIGARO in French 15 Jan 93 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by Claude Lorieux in Paris; date not given]

[Text] [Lorieux] The West has just inflicted a "corrective" strike on Saddam Husayn, your former enemy. You must be pleased.

[Velayati] The Iraqi regime imposed a war on us. That is a fact. But that does not mean that we have forgotten the very fraternal relations that existed between the Iraqi and Iranian peoples. The resumption of air attacks on Iraq or against the Iraqi people does not bode well. Our hope is that Iraq will obey the UN resolutions.

[Lorieux] Can Iraq respond to the Western raid?

[Velayati] I do not think so.

[Lorieux] So you think that this raid was not the first act in another war?

[Velayati] That is my opinion. The Iraqis do not have the same military capability as they did before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

[Lorieux] Though launched with UN cover and with the involvement of French and British aircraft, the Iraq operation appears to be primarily American. So is the United States again the "policeman" of the Persian Gulf?

[Velayati] Good security in the region should be based on regional cooperation. We are opposed to any external intervention in the region. We are against the presence of foreign forces in the very sensitive area of the Persian Gulf.

[Lorieux] The crisis between Tehran and the United Arab Emirates [UAE] over Abu Musa island in recent months has destroyed the goodwill that you restored in the Arab capitals of the Gulf. Could this error compromise your old plan for regional security cooperation?

[Velayati] Cooperation between Iran and the UAE over Abu Musa should develop within the framework of the treaty signed between our two countries in 1961. Some difficulties emerged a few months ago between us and the UAE. But we sent a delegation to the UAE and are expecting their delegation to visit Tehran.

[Lorieux] What is happening there?

[Velayati] Over 400 Arabs who live on Abu Musa have returned to their homes, as have teachers in Arab schools. Coexistence between Iranians and Arabs has resumed.

[Lorieux] Apart from Iraq, the Security Council also has to deal with the crisis in Bosnia-Hercegovina and the business of the 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel. The United Nations decided on a military intervention against Iraq first...

[Velayati] It is not the first time that the United Nations has resorted to the use of force. Remember Korea. But if the United Nations intervenes to ensure observance of Security Council resolutions, its intervention must observe two criteria—to remain independent of the military objectives of the superpowers or major powers, and to have as its objective a just and lasting solution of the problems.

The Security Council has adopted many resolutions on Bosnia-Hercegovina and the future of the Palestinians. But no superpower or major power has done what is necessary to make the Serbs and Israelis implement these resolutions. A question therefore arises. It is this: Why do the powers adopt an attitude of double standards when it comes to international problems?

[Lorieux] "Double standards:" You are using one of Saddam Husayn's favorite expressions!

[Velayati] If you perceive a situation of double standards, you, as a journalist, must draw attention to it. That does not mean that you have the same opinions as Saddam Husayn.

[Lorieux] After the Islamic conference in Jeddah in December one of your colleagues observed: "Velayati! Oh, yes, he delivered an emotional speech, then left!" What are you doing in practical terms for the Muslims in Bosnia- Hercegovina?

[Velayati] Since the start of the crisis we have sent assistance and humanitarian aid to the population of Bosnia-Hercegovina, to both Muslims and Croats. Furthermore, in international forums we have defended the Muslims and Croats who have been attacked by the Serbs.

[Lorieux] Do you think that the West should intervene militarily in Bosnia-Hercegovina?

[Velayati] I think so. Under the UN flag.

[Lorieux] Could Iran take part?

[Velayati] If the United Nations asked us to take part in an international operation under the UN flag and within the framework of international law, we would assess the request positively.

[Lorieux] You have come to Paris to sign the treaty banning chemical weapons. CIA chief Robert Gates has said: "Iran has a chemical weapons production program." Do you have any chemical weapons? Are you producing any? Are you constructing a chemical weapons factory?

[Velayati] I categorically reject the American statement that you cited. We have not produced any chemical weapons. We have no intention of manufacturing any. We have been the victims of them. My presence here proves very clearly that we are against the use, manufacture, and proliferation of chemical weapons.

[Lorieux] So are you willing to accept the sudden inspection visits envisaged by the new chemical weapons convention?

[Velayati] Yes, of course. It is good that we have signed it.

[Lorieux] Certainly. But the latest high-level official visit between Paris and Tehran was that of Roland Dumas to Iran back in March 1991. When will the next be?

[Velayati] Perhaps after the general election. A visit at ministerial level could take place then. Meanwhile, in the coming weeks an Iranian delegation will come to France and a French delegation will visit Iran.

[Lorieux] Paris has announced that British writer Salman Rushdie, sentenced to death by a "fatwah" issued by Ayatollah Khomeyni, was welcome in France and that he would be protected. Is there a prospect of another crisis between France and Iran?

[Velayati] It goes without saying that any negative measure, just like any positive measure, will have repercussions on our relations. The exchange of visits that I just mentioned is a positive move. However, any negative measure would have negative repercussions on our relations.

[Lorieux] Bill Clinton will be inaugurated in a few days' time. Unlike in the case of your attitude to the author of "The Satanic Verses," your relations with the United States are not impeded by a religious ban! Could the advent of a new president permit a thaw between Iran and America?

[Velayati] Since the revolution the United States has adopted a hostile attitude toward us. And it has not evolved.

[Lorieux] But what about with a new president, a Democrat?

[Velayati] The hostile U.S. policy in our regard has not changed regardless of whether Democrats or Republicans were in power.

Georgia's Shevardnadze Continues Visit

Meets Velayati

NC2001075693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of Georgia's State Council of Ministers, and Foreign Minister Velayati last night discussed the regional and international situations and ways to expand Tehran-Tbilisi relations. Emphasizing the significance of Iran's role in establishing stability and tranquillity in the region, Shevardnadze said he was grateful for Tehran's efforts to overcome the problems of neighboring countries.

He said: Fortunately, conflicts and problems are dying down in Georgia and Iran's peace-seeking role is such that I am certain my visit will help to reduce conflicts.

In response, Velayati stressed the need to expand relations between the two countries, saying: Iran and Georgia should work seriously to increase cooperation in all fields. Expressing satisfaction that problems in Georgia are being solved, Velayati said: I hope Iranian-Georgian cooperation will lead to a tranquil Caucasus and to a powerful and secure area.

The two countries agreed to open their embassies in Tehran and in Tbilisi.

Talks With Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD2001132293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] The second round of talks were held between Georgian State Council Chairman Edvard Shevardnadze and Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The main points of the agreement reached with the Georgian mission were cooperation in parliamentary affairs, economics, transportation, ports, shipping, telephone and telex communications, Georgia's use of Iran's marine satellite, Georgia's transit post communication, banking, trade, city planning, housing construction, tea production, medicine, culture, sports, the purchase of gas from Iran, and cooperation in tourism.

It was also announced that Iran and Georgia will be soon opening embassies in each other's country and that they will establish a joint economic cooperation commission to follow the practical implemention of cooperation and agreements reached between the the two countries' experts.

Emphasizing the expansion of international and regional cooperation, particularly regarding the establishment of peace and stability in the Karabakh region, Iran and Georgia reached comprehensive and positive agreements in the talks.

Later in the talks Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani thanked the expert missions of both countries and said the positive outcome of talks between Iranian and Georgian officials indicated fertile grounds for cooperation and understanding between the two countries. He said: We hope that the agreements will be implemented in practice.

Edvard Shevardnaze said that the volume of agreements is a suitable ground for future cooperation and the laying of firm foundations between the two countries.

The Georgian president declared that Iran's balanced policy regarding problems and issues of the region, particularly solving the issues of Georgia, have been extremely effective and in fact good relations between the two countries will guarantee future cooperation and Georgia's full independence.

The Georgian president added: I can assure you that Georgia will always stand by Iran in finding solutions to regional and international disputes.

Mr. Shevardnadze expressed satisfaction regarding the acceptance of an invitation by our country's president to visit Georgia. He said: I believe this trip will be effective in strengthening bilateral cooperation and the whole region.

At the end of this round of talks the ministers of trade, communications, agriculture, economic affairs and finance, housing and city planning, health, transportation, the head of the central bank, and the president of the sports federation signed documents on joint cooperation.

Confers With Majles Official

LD2001134493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the Georgian Council of Ministers, and Hasan Rowhani, deputy speaker of the Majles, discussed strengthening parliamentary relations between the Majles and the Georgian parliament at a meeting this morning.

Referring to the need to strengthen interparliamentary relations, Mr. Shevardnadze emphasized at the meeting that there should be more contact between the foreign affairs committees of the parliaments of the two countries.

Mr. Rowhani said: The developments in our neghboring countries to the north led to their independence. But we are currently witnessing problems, like the clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan. These clashes will definitely have an effect on the region.

While confirming Mr. Rowhani's remarks, Mr. Shevardnadze said: Those events are a source of worry to us. We hope those clashes will end soon. He concluded by expressing his happiness over Iran's mediation.

Meets Majles Speaker

LD2001145293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Georgian State Council Chairman Shevardnadze met with Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri this morning and emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran's experiences are extremely useful for the newly independent Republic of Georgia. He said the establishment of relations between the two countries, particularly the strengthening parliamentary relations, is significant.

Emphasizing the historic relations between Iran and Georgia, he said Iranian politics and culture have had a positive effect in enriching Georgian culture.

The chairman of the State Council said that the situation in Georgia and the Caucasus is difficult and emphasized his country's role in preventing events similar to those of Lebanon and the Balkans which could cause serious damage to the area.

Pointing out that without cooperation with a country as large as Iran it would be impossible to solve regional issues, he said Georgia is interested in Iran carrying out its important role in the region.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri then pointed out the previous administrative and political experiences of Mr. Shevardnadze and expressed hope that these experiences will be effective in the future improvement of the situation in Georgia. The Majles speaker recalled that the Iranian nation has good memories of Mr. Shevardnadze's policies while he held the office of foreign minister in supporting Iran, particularly his positive stand on Security Council Resolution 598. He said these were positive and unforgettable steps registered in history.

The Majles speaker pointed out the common cultural aspects of the two countries and said that there are suitable grounds for expansion of relations in the region. He emphasized Iran's support for the independence and territorial integrity of Georgia and said that the Majles is prepared to provide any help toward the expansion of relations. He called for the start of activity by the parliamentary friendship groups of the two countries.

At the end of the meeting a memorandum of understanding between the parliaments in guaranteeing the interests of the two countries was signed and again the two sides emphasized the daily expansion of cooperation.

Comments on Talks

LD2001180393 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Georgia's head of state Eduard Shevardnadze left Tehran today. [passage omitted]

On leaving Tehran, Mr. Shevardnadze said: I have talked with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the most important international and regional topics. The positions of the two countries of Iran and Georgia are identical, or close, on many issues.

He said that his visit to Tehran turned a new leaf in the two countries' cooperation, and added: The people of Georgia are faithful neighbors to the people of Iran. I feel that during my visit our friendship, which was cut off for 200 years, has been renewed.

Georgia's head of state said that during his visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran 15 very important agreements were signed, and thus the foundation was laid for a strong relationship between the two countries. He added: I am very pleased with the result of my visit; I offer my deep gratitude for the warm and friendly reception and the hospitality of the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i and His Excellency Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani assessed the results of his talks with the Georgian head of state as positive. He then said:

[Begin Hashemi-Rafsanjani recording] Over the past two days we were involved in many negotiations. We had two formal meetings and also two or three private talks. Our talks mainly concentrated on bilateral ties. We also reviewed conditions in the region and in the world. Mr. Shevardnadze is an experienced statesman and we believe his views are of value to us. We benefited from his views. In general, our views on regional and international issues are close. The bases for bilateral cooperation are good. Georgia has resources which we can use, while we have resources which it can use. Because Georgia is a newly independent state, it must shape its economy and politics. Of necessity, it must choose its friends and those with whom it must cooperate. We believe that Georgia is determined to make Iran one of its main partners for cooperation in the region. We welcome such a move.

Over a short period of time we held many meetings, signing 14-15 letters of understanding on gas, petrochemicals, transportation, commerce, as well as on cultural, technical and political issues. I believe that the two parties are ready to cooperate in all these fields. I think the visit by the Georgian head of state must be regarded as one of the most successful made to our country. [end recording]

Received by Shevardnadze

LD2001162593 Tehran IRNA in English 1551 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 20, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, said to visiting President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze here Wednesday that Iran and Georgia could further mutual relations and solve international problems "independent of the spectrum of the arrogant world powers."

Ayatollah Khamene'i observed that Shevardnadze's knowledge of the issues of Iran, as well as his historical meeting with the late leader of the Islamic Revolution Imam Khomeyni, in Tehran shortly before the collapse of Communism in the former Soviet Union offered a good background for the two countries on which to build closer relations in the future.

He said the Islamic Republic was greatly concerned about Russia's military aid to the Serbs which had "injured the feelings of the Muslims."

Ayatollah Khamene'i said the Muslim people in Bosnia-Hercegovina were "target of widespread acts against the human rights, and humans as well as the natural environment in that part of the world are being finished off."

He said "obviously, whoever helps the Serbs in their perpetration of those crimes shall be condemned in the history, and Georgia can play an influential role for preventing those crimes."

The leader expressed hope that the Georgian authorities would be alert to external insinuations that might seek to ruin the relations between Iran and Georgia, and commented that because of Shevardnadze's reliance on a rich political experience he would certainly play a crucial role in shaping the future of that republic.

Shevardnadze said that his previous meeting with Imam Khomeyni would continue to live in his mind "forever as an interesting and important memory".

He indicated that once the Soviet Union "seemed as a robust and imposing castle breakable by none. But internal developments blasted it from within and your predictions about the future of Marxism proved a reality."

The president of Georgia deplored the developments in Bosnia-Hercegovina and said the UN Security Council was to blame for it.

He described Iran's position towards the various international issues, and especially those in the Central Asia and in Karabakh as being "wise", and in the end observed that the culture of the people of Iran has a conspicuous presence in Georgia.

Nitrate-Oil Deal

LD2001172293 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Georgia's deputy prime minister, meeting today with Oil Minister Aqazadeh, requested the purchase of Iranian natural gas and some oil by-products and petrochemicals. He declared his country's readiness to sell amonium nitrate to our country.

Declaring Iran's readiness to export natural gas to Georgia, Mr. Aqazadeh requested the purchase of 200,000 tonnes of amonium nitrate per year from that country.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks

LD2001090893 Tehran IRNA in English 0658 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 20, IRNA—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz arrived here Tuesday night to discuss regional and international developments and Tehran-Beirut ties.

In an interview at Tehran's international Mehrabad airport, Buwayz who was welcomed by First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, referred to the important role Iran played in the Middle East and said that the Lebanese Government was willing to bolster ties with Iran in political, economic and cultural fields.

Turning to his country's stand vis-a-vis the plight of over 400 Palestinians expelled by the Zionist regime over a month ago, he said that they should return to their homeland.

He urged the international community to impose pressure on the Zionist regime to accept the U.N. Security Council Resolution 799.

Besharati said that Buwayz is to discuss with Iranian officials mutual relations as well as world developments including those of Iraq.

Speaker of Lebanon's Parliament, Nabih Birri is currently visiting Iran.

Received by President

LD2001131093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz this morning. The president stressed: The people of Lebanon want normality and security and do not wish the past situation to prevail in that country. He added: The present situation in Lebanon is hopeful, and the current signs seem generally positive.

The president described the occupation of southern Lebanon by the regime occupying Jerusalem as the main problem of that country. He called on Muslim and Arab countries to adopt a unified and coordinated policy to support Lebanon against the Zionist regime. He expressed the hope that the trend of peace and calm in Lebanon would continue with full government presence.

At the meeting, the Lebanese foreign minister praised the Islamic Republic of Iran for its role in establishing peace and calm in the region. He said: We are certain that Iran has had, and will have, a fundamental and major role in supporting the ideals of the Lebanese nation and can help us achieve more national unity in this country.

He submitted a report on Lebanon's sociological, political, and economic situation and the progress made. He said: A new era of construction and development has started in Lebanon and national unity is more consolidated by the day. He said that the manifestation of Lebanon's national unity against the Zionists was a result of the all-round presence of the people of Lebanon.

Meets With Velayati

LD2001131993 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] At today's meeting between the Iranian and Lebanese foreign ministers, the expulsion of a group of Palestinians from their homeland was reviewed. The two sides called on the international community to take steps to return them to their country.

Mr. Faris Buwayz, the Lebanese foreign minister, said on the subject: This issue is extremely sensitive. If those people do not return to their country and a third country accepts responsibility for them, the way would be paved for the expulsion of more Palestinians from their land. He criticized the Security Council's double standards about various global issues.

Stressing that efforts should continue for the repatriation of the expelled Palestinians, Foreign Minister Velayati described as logical the position of the Lebanese Government in that respect. He said: This issue coinciding with the attack on Iraq shows that the Security Council acts in the interests of some countries.

Lebanese Parliament Speaker Continues Visit

Meets Majles Speaker

LD1701205993 Tehran IRNA in English 1739 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—The speaker of Lebanon's parliament Nabih Birri in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri called for formation of parliamentary friendship groups and a joint economic commission between the two countries.

He referred to his country's resolve not to allow the Palestinians deported by the Zionist regime recently as a stand "in support of the cause of Palestine".

He said even if all the deportees lost their lives, Lebanon would not allow them enter the country.

Birri said it was the firm resistance of the Lebanese people that made them succeed in expelling the Zionist Army from the country. He added that his people had adequate knowledge of the situation of their friends and enemies.

Nateq-Nuri in response called Lebanon's stance towards the 417 expelled Palestinians as "a wise one" and said the position had been taken in coordination with the Palestinian ulema and intellectuals and showed Lebanon's high-level diplomacy and its independence, sovereignty and self-reliance.

Nateq-Nuri announced Iran's full support for Lebanon against Zionist aggression and said the Iranian Government and Majles will not withhold any assistance to that country.

He called the recent developments over the expulsion of the Palestinians last month as a disgraceful event for Israel which showed that resistant people can stand against the policies imposed by the United States and the arrogant powers.

Birri arrived in Tehran on Saturday for a five-day visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Views Israeli Intentions

LD1701211293 Tehran IRNA in English 1834 GMT 17 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—Visiting Speaker of Lebanon's Parliament Nabih Birri here Sunday accused the Zionist regime of trying to expand its realm by turning southern border strip of Lebanon into a Jewish settlement.

Speaking at a meeting with Vice-Speaker of the Majles Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rowhani, Birri said none of the Arab states, except Syria, has fulfilled their pledge of dlrs 1.632 billion in aid to Lebanon made in their summit meet in Fes, Morocco.

He said there were a concensus among all Lebanese Muslims and Christians that the al-Qods [Jerusalem] occupying regime was their enemy and Syria was their ally.

Birri said the Zionist regime has occupied one eighth of Lebanese territory including 103 towns and townships, plundering the natural resources of the occupied regions and forcing their inhabitants to live under hardest conditions.

Rowhani reaffirmed Iran's full-scale support for the resistance of the Lebanese people against aggressions of the Zionist regime, saying that the Islamic republic was ready to provide all kinds of assistance to the people and government of Lebanon.

Rowhani also called for establishment of friendship groups between the parliaments of the two countries.

Confers With Velayati

LD1801165493 Tehran IRNA in English 1537 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan 18, IRNA—Lebanese parliamentary speaker, Nabih Birri, told Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here today that Lebanon's resistance and national unity was the major factor of security against the foreign enemy.

"We know the Zionist enemy tries hard to destroy our country, But, we are determined to stand against the plots through national unity and resistance", he added.

Velayati said Iran was always concerned over developments in Lebanon, and its support and guidance to that country was obvious to everyone.

He stressed on mutual cooperation and said a joint Tehran-Beirut economic commission would be held during the forthcoming visit of Lebanese foreign minister to Tehran.

Velayati outlined areas of cooperation in the economic, trade, scientific and cultural fields and announced Iran's readiness to exchange students and professors between the two countries.

The two sides also exchanged views over regional developments including the problems of 415 Palesitnians expelled from their homes mid December to the south Lebanese borders.

Received by President

LD1801162793 Tehran IRNA in English 1553 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 18, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in a meeting with Lebanese parliamentary speaker, Nabih Birri, today said, "it is about time that all groups in Lebanon while exercising their vigilance closed ranks and made reconstruction efforts so as to stop outsiders and enemies from penetrating or exploiting the country."

He stressed the need for Lebanese people to build a safe political atmosphere and popular rule to decide on their own, and added that friendly countries especially the Islamic Republic of Iran would participate and join the people of Lebanon to reconstruct the ruins.

Before the president's remarks, Birri appreciated Iran's humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people and called Iran's support for national unity in his country as "a main step on the way of reconstruction".

Birri also described the Lebanese parliament's stand on the Zionist deportation of 415 Palestinians as " decisive and unprecedented".

Meeting With Khamene'i

LD2001115193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] When His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, this morning received Lebanese National Assembly Speaker Mr. Nabih Birri and his entourage, he described the action taken by the United States and its accomplices as a shameful crime against the people and country of Iraq.

Referring at the meeting to the recent attacks by the United States and its Western allies on Iraq and its people, the esteemed leader said: We reject Saddam and the Ba'thist regime, but cannot remain indifferent to the fate of the Muslim people of Iraq. The United States and its accomplices have committed crimes against Iraq, and the hands of the officials of those countries are stained with the blood of the people of Iraq. They are so shameless that they have entered a country under a pretext and have put it under a lot of pressure.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i questioned the West for not resorting to force against the Serbs and the Zionist regime. He added: The United States pursues its evil aims in the Persian Gulf region. There is no doubt that it will come unstuck and will definitely pay for its crime.

The esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution described Lebanon as the front line of the Islamic front against the Zionists. Stressing the need for Islamic countries to support the people of Lebanon he said: Muslim nations cannot overlook the occupation of Lebanese villages and lands, and the repeated acts of aggression by the Zionist regime against that Islamic country. While the Zionists enjoy the unconditional support of world arrogance, we cannot remain indifferent while innocent Palestinians are driven out of their home and birthplace.

The esteemed leader said that exerting pressure on the innocent people of Palestine in the occupied lands is part and parcel of the crimes of the United States. He criticized the Arab world and Muslim countries for being indifferent to Zionist crimes against the Muslim and innocent people of Palestine, and the expulsion of Palestinians from their occupied lands.

Finally, the leader of the Islamic revolution stressed that maintaining national unity and solidarity in Lebanon will depend on the cohesion, love, and friendship among the people of that country and the maintenance of true justice in Lebanon's political structure.

According to this report, before His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i spoke at this meeting, which was also attended by Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri, Mr. Nabih Birri, speaker of the Lebanese National Assembly, submitted a short report to the esteemed leader on the current situation in his country and the interference by the Zionist regime in Lebanon's internal affairs. He spoke of the importance of Iran's assistance in the reconstruction of the wreckage resulting from 17 years of fighting in Lebanon.

Concludes Visit

LD2001182193 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Lebanese Parliamentary Speaker Mr. Nabih Birri said before leaving Tehran this afternoon that his meeting with the leader of the Islamic revolution had been the most fruitful of his meetings in our country.

He considered the setting up of the common parliamentary commission between the two countries and the use of coordinated efforts for convening an Islamic parliamentary speakers' conference to be one of the most important achievements of his visit to Tehran.

Mr. Nabih Birri praised the self-sacrifice and sentiments of our nation and authorities regarding Lebanese issues, and termed the exalted leadership's guidelines for resisting the Zionist regime reassuring.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, also spoke on the setting up of the joint parliamentary commission between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Lebanon and added that cooperation between Tehran and Beirut for following up issues has been agreed upon and the expansion of bilateral ties will continue.

Mr. Nabih Birri ended his four-day visit to our country this afternoon and was officially seen off by the Majles speaker.

Rafsanjani, Bosnia's Izetbegovic Hold Telephone Talk

LD2101121793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Bosnia-Hercegovina President Alija Izbetbegovic talked with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani via telephone this morning. Rafsanjani congratulated the president and people of Bosnia-Hercegovina on the occasion of the divine appointment of the great prophet of Islam. He said the Serbs are enemies to both the Muslims and Croats and have no aim but to destroy the people of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Croatia. The president emphasized the creation of unity and increasing coordination between the Muslims and the Croats as well as Iran's continuation of its humanitarian aid and the supply of winter fuel for Muslims of Bosnia-Hercegovina.

During this telephone conversation, Izbetbegovic in turn congratulated the Iranian leader, president, and people on the auspicious festival of divine appointment. He reported to our country's president the latest situation in the region and the current peace talks in Geneva. The president of Bosnia-Hercegovina also expressed gratitude for the remarks of our country's president regarding the creation of unity among Muslims and Croats and said efforts are under way and we hope that some small lack of coordination will be resolved in the near future. Finally Izbetbegovic expressed gratitude for the aid and support that the government and people of Iran have provided for the Muslim people of Bosnia-Hercegovina.

UN Envoy Calls For Increased Pressure on Serbs

LD2001094793 Tehran IRNA in English 0857 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] United Nations, New York, Jan. 20, IRNA—Latest developments in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Iraq and the Persian Gulf region were discussed in Tuesday's meeting of Iran's permanent representative to the U.N. Kamal Kharrazi and U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali.

Kharrazi told IRNA after the meeting that he had voiced Iran's concern over the events in Bosnia to the secretary general and that international pressures should be intensified against the Serbs to put an end to their obstinacy at the Geneva talks.

Regretting that the aggressors were not concerned about punishment by the relevant international organizations, Kharrazi expressed deep concern over possible disregard for the Muslims' rights in the procedures of the Geneva peace talks.

He underscored the need for observation of the full rights of the Bosnian Muslims as well as unity and territorial integrity of the country.

Kharrazi lashed out at the double standard attitude adopted by the Security Council on regional crises saying that the public opinion of the region was concerned about such an attitude. While the Zionist regime and the Serbs were left alone to do whatever they wanted, Iraq was being subjected to raids by Western allied forces, he said.

He reiterated Iran's support for the Security Council's resolutions on Iraq but voiced Iran's concern over the allied attacks on the country in which civilians also fell victims.

The two sides also discussed developments in the Persian Gulf region.

Majles Speaker on Domestic, Foreign Issues

NC1901122893 Tehran SALAM in Persian 30 Dec 92 pp 1, 4, 10

["Exclusive" interview with Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri by unidentified correspondent in Tehran on 28 December—punctuation as published]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [SALAM] Looking at decisionmaking centers, the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, as in the past, is involved in legislature. The Expediency Discernment Council did approve laws and although its duties have been limited to revising the Constitution, it still legislates sometimes. It is not limited to the different views between the Council of Guardians and the Majles; in some cases it reforms law. There are similar cases elsewhere. In your view, can't the number of decisionmaking centers be settled by revising the Constitution? We recently heard that the Supreme Council of the Free University approved a law on the university and is implementing it. (We are referring to the law under which university employees are not liable to the Labor Law). We pursued the issue and the Supreme Council of the Free University said this is a law that concerns them and they approved it! These issues inflict a great blow to the very framework of the country's legal structure. What is your opinion on this and what should be done?

[Nateq-Nuri] As you pointed out, the revision of the Constitution set out a limit for the Expediency Discernment Council and determined the cases that would allow this Council to act. Previously, special conditions prevailed before the revision of the Constitution, but now this council has a specific meaning. A good example of its presence is felt when the Majles and the esteemed Council of Guardians cannot reach a conclusion and our decisions are not approved by them or when the gentlemen do not approve the revisions. An example of this is the bill on "appointing the acting head of the City Council," which was sent recently to the Expediency Discernment Council. I think the council acts according to its legal definition and not contrary to it. As for the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council that was founded by the imam, may his soul be sanctified, when the Majles enters the scene, the council does not (enter into cultural affairs). They neither violate the laws that have been approved by the Majles nor add one word. The process the council follows is that when the Majles enters the scene, the council does not. When there is a vacuum and when the Majles does not enter the scene, the Supreme Cultural Council can act.

The Supreme Cultural Council is an institution founded by the imam, may his soul be sanctified; there is a decision on this. The council has specific guidelines and acts on the basis of a decision approved by the leader. There has been no friction between these two centers, because they do not enter the realms of Majles activities. We have the Central Council in which the heads of the three branches are present and discuss issues on which the Majles cannot give its opinion. The need to form this council was determined by the imam from the outset of the revolution.

[SALAM] Incidentally, one of the issues the Supreme Cultural Council referred to is that law is not respected as it should be in our society. This disrespect may come in various forms. How do you see this problem in society?

[Nateq-Nuri] We cannot deny that law is not respected as it should be in our country. Law envisages all regulations. For example, observing the traffic lights at a crossroads is a law and is respected as it should be. I accept part of what you said. If we want our system to be more stable and in better order, we should stress the need to respect laws. Nothing can be solved by violating laws. [passage omitted]

[SALAM] Going on to political issues, do you think the atmosphere in society is becoming nonpolitical, something that will have repercussions? When the president formed his government his view was that a cabinet needs only one statesman and that the other members of the cabinet should work. From one aspect, if we consider politics in the good sense, then this can be considered as a sound remark. But from the other angle, when a society is not political, about 10-12 million youths will be moving in a nonpolitical direction. Generally speaking, don't you think society is becoming nonpolitical (in its true sense)? But we are paying the price of being political in various places and in its worst forms.

[Nateq-Nuri] I do not accept that society is becoming nonpolitical and that it should be encouraged to do so. The differences that existed among the various groups at the beginning do not exist now. I do not know how you define politics. If you mean the relationship between individuals, between an individual and society, between an individual and the government, between the government and the individual, between the country and the world, I believe that all these exist in our society. The people now follow even the most minor political issues. This shows they are political. People keep up with foreign policies and domestic problems. I do not know what you mean when you ask who has encouraged or encourages society to become nonpolitical. During recent meetings—at university lectures and in my recent visit to Mashhad—one of the things I pointed out was the need for our student brothers, the scholars, and the academics to be present on the political scene and to express their views on domestic and foreign policies. We are proud that our people have a political presence and understand things well.

[SALAM] Your saying "the need" to be present, I think, means society has become nonpolitical or is in the process of becoming so, because the nature of a modern society lies in it being political and there should be no need to point out the need for this now as was done at the outset of the revolution or when the need for the people's political presence had to be emphasized. But now there is an escape from politics and....

[Nateq-Nuri] There is a reason for what you call an escape from politics. Previously I said there is no encouragement (at least by the government) to make society nonpolitical. I said I do not accept that our society is nonpolitical. I do accept that there may be some who flee politics.

The major reason is that the conflicts, controversies, and disputes unfortunately tired some and made them ponder and say: When one group accuses the other, it is better to be cautious and step aside. This proves what the esteemed leader stated in his meeting with officials. He said that disputes may tire a group in society and distance them from both groups. But if there are no disputes and there are groups that discuss things without insulting each other, the people's presence will increase and they will be encouraged.

[SALAM] There is a specific law on what you refer to (insults).

[Nateq-Nuri] That's true, but the (psychological) reason for fleeing politics is that which I gave above.

[SALAM] How many parties do you think should exist in the country? If tendencies do exist, should they be placed within a framework so that groups can put forward their platforms and one group be blamed when something goes wrong? Do you see a need for this—offering ideas and problems as a specific platform—so that people will actually vote for programs rather than an individual?

[Nateq-Nuri] I believe in organization and believe that a country—especially one like ours where every one and a half years public elections are held for various reasons (such as parliamentary and presidential elections, elections for the Council of Guardians, and unexpected issues), a country that constantly wants to seek public vote and needs the people's presence on the scene—needs various organizations and platforms.

[SALAM] Your Excellency, my next question is about freedom. I don't want to ask a general question and hear a general answer. We want to know your precise view on freedom. Generally speaking, it is known that freedom should not be contrary to Islam. How do you assess issues that are contrary to Islam? What do you consider to be the parameters of issues contrary to Islam? Issues that are contrary to public security or public interests are relatively clear, but there are issues that have not been interpreted and that are contrary to Islam. These are also mentioned in the Constitution. How can one understand what the parameters of an issue that is contrary to Islam are and what its relationship to freedom is?

[Nateq-Nuri] You have pointed out something good—the general aspects of freedom about which everyone speaks. In our country there are several criteria that should be considered and freedom should be judged on these criteria. The shari'ah, the Constitution, and public interests are all among these criteria and each one is discerned by a specific center. For example, we have the National Security Council, which acts as the leadership's consultative arm. But above all these there is the esteemed leader who discerns what is contrary to security or not. The courts and the judiciary tend to acts that contradict law.

As for the shari'ah and issues that are contrary to it, there may be varying views. Someone may consider something contrary to the shari'ah, while another person may not. It is here that we have the velayat-e faqih [Vice Regency of the Supreme Jurisconsult], who states the final view concerning public interests and the country's security. This is his duty.

"So take what the apostle assigns you and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you" [Koranic verse]. Freedom is judged on this criterion. When we say the velayat-e faqih should be a learned scholar who meets all the prerequisites, it is so that he can discern right from wrong.

I will cite a very good example concerning television. A film may be shown and someone may consider it to be contrary to the shari'ah; someone else may think otherwise. One may say the film is unacceptable and another may say it is not. The answer to the question on whose views should be considered can be given by the velayat-e faqih; after all, when it comes to rules, one person should have the last say. In our system that person is the velayat-e faqih, whose views are considered as a criterion to determine the limits of freedom.

[SALAM] My next question concerns the cultural onslaught. It is now about 14 years since our revolution. The intellectual backbone of almost all our youth has been formed within the framework of the revolution and with the help of the television, radio, and press we have. Don't you think our youths' situation—from the cultural perspective—is far worse than that of the generation of the '50's [1970-1980]? This is the public's assessment. At least, the public does not expect these youths to develop in such a society. Where do you think the problem lies? Do all our problems emanate from the West? Have they been involved in the domestic cultural issues? If this process continues, what, do you think, will happen?

[Nateq-Nuri] Frankly speaking, I do not agree hat the situation facing youths today is worse than that in the '50's or before the revolution. If we study facts and figures and, say, compare the percentage of youths who perform prayers today with the percentage in the past or if we compare the extent of corruption today with corruption then, we will see that this is not so.

We may compare the current situation with the situation in the first years of the revolution. In that case we can reach a conclusion. But saying that the situation now is worse than that before the revolution is unacceptable. Today, before you arrived, Qera'ati was here and he mentioned a very high figure that is worth noting based on a statistical study in the country's high schools on the issue of voluntary prayers performed by students. Before the revolution, this spirit did not exist, apart from in a very limited number of schools. The same applies to our youths in the universities.

But I accept one thing: In the revolution, our youths' situation is not satisfactory. Part of this is natural. After the revolution victory the atmosphere that prevailed was a combatant atmosphere that attracted the people and the youths to religion. The victory of the revolution and the struggle against the regime was formed on the basis of religion and the youths getting nearer to religion, combat, and revolution. Now in the Islamic countries, the proof of the Muslims' struggles is their attendance at prayers and religious centers.

A major part of the problems that have been mentioned stem from our not having carried out enough cultural and propaganda activities. The more we distance ourselves from the revolution's beginnings and its centers, the more the revolutionary atmosphere dies down. Do you think the revolution changed everyone overnight and that the people have suddenly changed? Naturally, the revolution wave and the prevailing atmosphere influenced a large group of people and now, the more we distance ourselves from that era and the more the atmosphere that prevailed then dies down, the more some people become active.

Next to distancing ourselves from the revolution's roots, I should add the West's cultural onslaught. Like you, I believe this onslaught is not by the West in the main; only a major, strong part of it is. At home we have some elements that create problems. Counterrevolution or so-called opposition elements are trying to sneer at us and state their opposition. Social problems also existed before the war and one reason for this may be said to be "poverty."

[SALAM] Some believe that some of the problems are caused by some of the films that are shown and by the activities of some of the domestic press. This group believes the television programs and domestic cultural problems should be limited as much as possible.

Another group believes the contrary, that with no entertainment programs offered, youths turn to videos and to private film sessions and eventually we lose control of them and do what they please. What do you think? Should we limit the atmosphere more, when our cultural productions are so low, and use foreign programs less? If we moved in this direction, could we decrease the influence of videos and satellite broadcasting?

Or do you believe that a second alternative should be chosen and more leniency shown so that we will have the lesser of two evils by further opening up the cultural doors, hoping to avoid immodesty? Of the two, which one do you favor?

[Nateq-Nuri] I do not accept either of the two. I think we have a third alternative. I do not believe we should make our cultural programs (television, movie, theater, press, and...) more restricted, because this will further provoke the people's curiosity. By closing existing paths and opening up others, we will never succeed. If we must let something be done, we should offer a sound way in which to do it. Otherwise, if we close every path to the youths, they will certainly rebel.

As for opening up our doors to Western culture so that it will become an ordinary phenomenon for the people and thus lose its luster, I think this is not correct. If things lose their luster and influence when they become ordinary, the West would not be facing the growing decadence it faces today. I believe we must have more intense cultural activity. Powerful and attractive films should be produced that will offer entertainment and help to preserve canonical criteria. We can and should provide enough entertainment for our society. Plans should be compiled for sport, which should also consider religious and moral dimensions. We should carry out cultural activities for our youths and see to it that they do not tire of cultural programs by adding to the entertainment aspects of such programs. This is difficult. We want to have a variety of cultural programs that will be coupled with entertainment and will also be legitimate and not set bad examples. Ruling is difficult and everything should be based on responsible planning and programs.

[SALAM] What Your Excellency says is correct. From the start the assumption was that if the third alternative was implemented, the first two alternatives would not have been raised.

[Nateq-Nuri] So we must see to it that the third alternative is implemented.

[SALAM] What problem has prevented this from happening?

[Nateq-Nuri] We have many problems. Time solves many problems. I believe that if we mentioned the programs we are mentioning now five or 10 years ago, some in society would have resisted. The imam, may his soul be sanctified, stated that time and place play a major role in problems. Time and place play a role even in religious jurisprudence.

[SALAM] So Your Excellency believes in qabd and bast? [reference to God's spiritual effusion on man, bast stimulating the heart and depressing the soul and qabd depressing the heart and stimulating the soul]

[Nateq-Nuri] In the sense to which the gentlemen [not further specified] refer, no. I say some things may have been permissible because of the conditions at that time. Let us assume that if, during the war, the Tehran mayor renovated Laleh Park or built a new square, society may have criticized him and said these were not things to be done during war, when blood was being shed. But this is necessary when the time is right.

We do not have the necessary facilities now. We are not in a financial and economic situation that lets us do what we must do. I believe the spiritual reward for building a sports center is no less than that for building a mosque. The idea is there but we do not have the necessary facilities.

[SALAM] I would like to ask a personal question. Do you have a video [recorder] at home? If so, what films do you and your family watch?!

[Nateq-Nuri] Yes. It is obvious what films I watch—films about events or that deal with the country's security affairs so that I might be informed.

The children are interested in cartoons. Naturally, if I can find feature films or documentaries that do not convey a bad message, I do not see why these films should not be watched.

[SALAM] We think the interview has progressed well. In the fourth term of the Majles there are 186 new deputies. How much time will the country's legislature need to acquire the necessary experience to deal with the country's problems seriously? How do you evaluate the deputies' ability to approach bills and draft bills (especially as no parties are involved, because, if there were parties, the presence of new people would not pose a big problem and the specific party's platforms would be used as a basis)?

Don't you think it will take at least two years for the Majles to acquire the stability it needs and to seriously deal with draft bills and bills?

[Nateq-Nuri] In terms past the new deputies were not few. Each term has seen new deputies. Their number in the past never reached 186 but there could be between 140 and 145 new deputies in the past.

[SALAM] Your remark is correct. But, then, a certain number of experienced forces remained. This time one faction gained more votes so many of these [experienced] people were removed.

[Nateq-Nuri] This Majles has been compensated as far as the competence of deputies is concerned. The education and knowledge of the new deputies is higher than in the past term. When debating bills, the deputies elected to the Majles now speak very well and show they know about events. [passage omitted]

[SALAM] As Majles speaker, when do you think the text of the official speeches of the Majles' closed session should be published in the country's official newspapers?

Should the situation remain as it is or should a body be formed to deal with affairs concerning this?

[Nateq-Nuri] Worldwide, there are affairs that are confidential and a certain time should expire before they are publicized. It is not long since the war and since all the affairs concerning the closed sessions of the Majles during the war era and the decisions concerning war and peace could be published with the permission of the commander-in-chief; the time may come when the need to publicize these will arise. He may not consider the time to be ripe now. I am not very familiar with this.

[SALAM] All the issues discussed during the closed sessions at that time concerned the war?

[Nateq-Nuri] We had virtually no other closed session but the sessions on the war.

[SALAM] I have a personal question to ask. If you were a newspaper publisher, how would the reportage on the Majles session be laid out? What would you report and on what problems would you concentrate?

[Nateq-Nuri] If I knew how things worked in a newspaper, I would publish a newspaper myself. You may know what you are talking about because you publish a newspaper. I don't. [passage omitted]

[SALAM] Foreign policy. During the past few years, it has been said we have reformed our policies on those when we were hardliners. We do not want to reject or approve the past, but looking at the recent incident, a corpse they want to resurrect (Abu Musa Island), what do you think the outcome of such policy will be? Don't you think that everything that is happening is because of our naivete and our thinking that if we became friends with the Persian Gulf countries, they would accept our friendship? Can't we actually say the United Arab Emirates [UAE], to which we showed the best kind of friendship, behaved in the worst way recently? How does Your Excellency assess this situation?

[Nateq-Nuri] They lowered their tone for some time. By they I do not mean only the shaykhs of the region. The regional shaykhs are not acting on their own. Their action comes from somewhere else. The truth is that the UAE is neither in a position to enter the scene nor can it confront us. The same applies to the others. They do not confront us. I think it is world policy and part of the new world order that is being implemented in this part of the region, because arrogance, headed by the United States, which considers itself the unrivalled master, felt that Iran's words—at home too—displayed some flexibility. In the political differences at home, the sides were divided into hardliners and moderates. When the [Majles] elections ended, it was heard at home and abroad that the right-wing and compromising (!) faction had won and that the road to the United States had opened (!).

They believed they could lower their tone to a certain extent and start socializing (!); all these were reported on the telexes as well. You surely know this. But after the fourth term of the Majles was formed and the leader's strong and decisive positions, followed by the strong and decisive positions of the Majles (against the United States, Salman Rushdie, Palestine, and...) were stated, they felt they had miscalculated. And with the decisive stance of the leader and the explicit stance of the Majles, they realized nothing had changed in the country.

In his meeting with the Majles Foreign Policy Commission, the esteemed leader stated: "There are thousands of ways to establish links with the world but the road leading to the United States is closed."

In our meetings with the officials of the Palestinian jihad and revolution, we told them their revolution is not separate from our revolution and that they should continue their struggle. I said that as stated in the speeches at the beginning of the term, we still believe what the imam said in 1342 [1963], when he linked Iran and Palestine and the United States and Israel. So our revolution is inseparable from the Palestinian revolution. This is the state of affairs in the world and this is a problem for them. There is reaction to this. The United States and they [as published] actually thought that with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, they could become the custodians of Central Asia. But the various ideological and geographic conditions finally made Central Asia's relations with Iran flourish; this is a problem for them. It is also a problem for them when some of our other neighbors say that if they want to go to Central Asia, they should pass through Iran and that Iran cannot be ignored. This too is a problem for them. When we say we will go to Bosnia-Hercegovina (either rightly or wrongly) to help them, when our planes take relief (blankets, lanterns, foodstuffs, and provisions), they suddenly state that Iran has delivered arms to Bosnia! Their enmity with us works to our benefit and suddenly news is published among the Muslims that Iran is helping the Muslims in one way or another. We also have Afghanistan on our minds. So, ultimately, Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb islands, which are raised by the UAE, form a small part of this pressure they are inflicting on us because they see we are inflexible. The latest issue—the approval of the human rights resolution against Iran—is linked with the Abu Musa issue; the difference is that human rights are discussed at the United Nations within a legal and political context and the other issue is raised in another form.

[SALAM] Do you think our stance has become stricter? The best thing we can think of is that the past situation continue. But why is the issue of the three islands—which could have been exploited before—being exploited now?

[Nateq-Nuri] The reason is that as long as there was a war, they did not think it advisable to enter the scene in this way. They had imposed a war on us and that was enough. They thought that with this war they would end everything. But the war did not solve anything. After the war and the demise of the imam, may his soul be sanctified, they hoped that with the coming to power of the esteemed leader and in view of conditions after the imam, Iran's policy would become more moderate. They thought the imam was a hardliner and, as they said, a radical and that after his death we would become more moderate and lower our tone. When the leader came to power, they saw that he too had the same stances. They anticipated the Majles elections and the outcome of the domestic controversies. They thought of what stance to adopt if the hardliners won and that if the moderates won, it would be to their benefit! But now they have seen that all the doors are closed, hence their decision to increase their pressure on us. You know that very recently some countries like Japan decided not to sell us their multiple-use products. Even a knife that is used to peel a cucumber can be used to kill. So if we want to import knives they will tell us: No, you may use this knife to cut open someone's guts. We won't sell it to you! All these are pressures being placed on our country.

[SALAM] Handing the budget bill to the Majles, the president said the deficit was nil—a turning point. One of the gentlemen [Majles deputies] said this budget bill was a source of pride for the clergymen. Do you think this budget is a turning point, especially when rial incomes have been calculated on the basis of a floating rate [of foreign exchange] and when the government's tax income has not increased? There is only one way the dollar rate can be altered; had we done the same for the 1367 [1988] budget, the worst economic year in the recent decade, we may not have had a budget deficit then either. Do you think this is a turning point and a significant change in the government's capability or just a sham and that the budget deficit will emerge?

[Nateq-Nuri] That the budget deficit in 1372 [year beginning 21 March 1993] will reach zero is not because of a change in the rate of foreign exchange, as you say. This was envisaged in the first Five-Year Plan. That plan studied the extent of borrowing in 1367, in 1368, and then until 1372 to end the budget deficit. This was a forecast made by the Five-Year Plan and it was on this basis that the plan reached the point it has.

[SALAM] But this was not what was assumed in the Five-Year Plan. It was assumed that this [budget deficit] could be achieved by introducing a single rate of foreign exchange.

[Nateq-Nuri] Then the assumption was to go at such a pace as to reach a zero budget deficit in 1372.

[SALAM] In 1372, 3.5 percent could be added to the cashflow; in other years this figure may increase to between 20-30 percent.

[Nateq-Nuri] This is now being studied by the [Budget] Commission. Until we have carried out our final studies in the commission and looked at all the figures, we cannot make a hasty judgment. My initial reply is that this figure has dropped to zero. As to what mechanisms and means have been used, it is still too early to judge. Let us have the Majles carry out its studies. Then we will judge.

[SALAM] I will again ask a personal question. Inflation is a serious problem in our society. Who does the shopping in your house?

[Nateq-Nuri] My wife.

[SALAM] Does she ever complain that goods are becoming more expensive each day?

[Nateq-Nuri] My wife complains daily and says, for example: I spent 10,000 rials today without having anything to show for it.

[SALAM] What do you tell her?

[Nateq-Nuri] Well, I say that whether we want it or not, there is inflation worldwide, that we are a country that wants to stand on its own two feet, and that we also have a post-war situation. In parallel with the inflation to which you refer, there is also an increase in wages. My salary when I first started in the Majles some years ago was not the same as it is today. The law on coordinated wages came into being. The same applies to all civil servants. Inflation can be tolerated with the increase in wages. And some inflation is because of our post-war problems and all the damage that was incurred. He is a good man and will accept this. [as published]

[SALAM] I thank you for having granted us this opportunity. Since Your Excellency does not have enough time to continue the interview, we will ask the other questions on economic and human rights at another time.

[Nateq-Nuri] I too have a lot to add and, God willing, we will soon have an opportunity to continue.

[SALAM] We thank Your Excellency for your attention and your participation in this interview.

Khamene'i Decrees Amnesty for 1,780 Prisoners

LD2001172893 Tehran IRNA in English 1522 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 20, IRNA—The leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i today decreed that prison terms of 1,780 inmates be pardoned or commuted on the auspicious occasion of Maba'th, the day the Almighty appointed Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) as the final messenger to mankind.

The leader's decree was in response to a proposal made by head of the judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi.

The prisoners liable to the pardon decree had been convicted by the Islamic revolutionary, civil and martial courts.

Counternarcotic Operation in Central Province

LD1601163893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1230 GMT 16 Jan 93

[Text] A two-day operation was staged in the central province. Twenty-one persons involved in the production and distribution of narcotics in that province were arrested and handed over to the judicial authorities.

According to a Central News Unit report, during the course of the operation staged by six patrolling units belonging to the central district's law enforcement forces, over two kg of opium, 1.3 kg of hashish, and 97 grams of opium residue were discovered and seized. Also, 134 addicts were identified and arrested during the time of these seizures.

Pakistan

Defense Minister Receives Turkish Delegation

BK1901114693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Pakistan and Turkey are to join hands at various levels for progress and prosperity of their masses. This was stated by the minister for defense, Syed Ghaus Ali Shah, at a meeting with an eight-member Turkish defense delegation which called on him in Rawalpindi today. It was led by the secretary of the Turkish Ministry of Defense, Lieutenant General Huseyin Tabakoglu. The defense minister told the delegation that due to unresolved issue of Kashmir, Pakistan had to maintain preparedness at all times. However, it was Pakistan's belief that no problem could be resolved without a meaningful dialogue. He apprised the Turkish defense delegation of the atrocities perpetrated upon innocent Kashmiris in held Kashmir and said Turkey's moral support was an encouragement for Kashmiri people.

Further Report

BK1901144893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] The defense minister, Syed Ghaus Ali Shah, has said Pakistan cannot remain oblivious to its defense so long as Kashmir issue remains unresolved. He was talking to the visiting Turkish defense delegation led by Lieutenant General Huseyin Tabakoglu in Islamabad today. Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said no problem could be solved through war. He apprised the Turkish delegation of the atrocities perpetrated upon innocent Kashmiris in Held Kashmir and said Turkey's moral support would encourage them in realizing their objective of the right to self-determination as envisaged in UN resolutions. He expressed the hope that the world body would avoid double standards on international issues. Lt. Gen. Tabakoglu said Turkey would stand by Pakistan in the hour of need.

The Turkish defense delegation also called on the federal minister for defense production, Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani, in Islamabad today. Mr. Bijarani apprised the delegation that the government has decided to encourage private sector to invest in defense production in Pakistan. Lt. Gen. Huseyin Tabakoglu appreciated the policy of self-reliance of the present government. Both sides emphasized that a number of joint ventures in the field of trade and defense should be enhanced.

President Discusses Bosnia With Turkey's Ecevit

TA1901094293 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Text] Democratic Left Party leader Bulent Ecevit, who is conducting contacts in Pakistan, has been received by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. It was reported that the democratization process in Pakistan and international issues were discussed during the meeting.

TRT [Turkish Radio and Television] correspondent Irfan Sapmaz reports that, referring to Bosnia-Hercegovina, the Pakistani president declared that he shares Ecevit's worries on this matter. Ecevit remarked that Ghulam Ishaq Khan said that the Islamic countries failed to demonstrate the necessary reaction on the subject of Bosnia-Hercegovina.

During the meeting, Ecevit noted that an imposed Cyprus solution will not bring peace to the island and could lead to a tragedy similar to the one being experienced in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

Turkey Asks India To Protect Muslim Holy Places

BK2101085593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Turkey has asked India to take effective steps for protecting the life, property, and honor of its Muslims and their holy places. A press release issued by the Turkish Embasy in Islamabad says the desecration of Babri Mosque at the hands of Hindu fanatics has caused widespread anger and anguish among Muslims.

Sharif Lauds UAE President's Assistance to Country

BK1801041093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif has praised United Arab Emirates [UAE] President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan for his valuable assistance to Pakistan and expressed the confidence that Pakistan-UAE friendly relations and multifaceted cooperation will continue to grow from strength to strength. He stated this while talking to newsmen after welcoming and holding informal talks with the UAE president in Rahimyar Khan yesterday. The distinguished guest arrived in Rahimyar Khan on a private visit. The prime minister described the UAE president as a sincere and true friend of Pakistan, saying Shaykh Zayid Hospital in Lahore, the airport, and several colleges and hospitals in Rahimyar Khan, assistance to the flood-affected people without any formal request from Pakistan, and, above all, economic assistance to Islamabad are the living examples of his friendship with Pakistan.

Answering a question, the prime minister said the United Arab Emirates has deported only those Pakistanis recently who had taken the law into their hands. He said he cannot support the violation of laws of Pakistan or any other country. The prime minister also expressed his displeasure with the attitude of certain newspapers which are publishing baseless stories about the United Arab Emirates.

Minister Says 'Goodwill' Reason for Bhutto's Election

BK2101031693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 21 Jan 93

[Text] Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, minister of state for foreign affairs, has described as wrong the impression that a secret agreement or an undestanding had been reached between the government and the opposition in the context of Ms. Benazir Bhutto's election as the chairperson of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National Assembly. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad yesterday, he said the election of the opposition leader is based on goodwill and sincerity for the promotion of democracy.

Bhutto on Opposition Moves, Gulf Situation

BK1601122793 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 16 Jan 93 p 1, 10

[Text] Karachi, Jan. 15: Ms. Benazir Bhutto, co-Chairperson, PPP [Pakistan People's Party] and leader of Opposition has said that democracy was not functioning in the country and "repeated efforts are being made to forcefully win over Opposition members on government side".

"We have no confidence that democracy has any chances in Pakistan and are therefore demanding an interim national government to hold free and fair elections", she said while addressing a Press conference at her residence on Friday evening. PPP leaders Mr. Aftab Shahbari Mirani, Manzoor Hussain, Wassan, Nisar Khuhro, Raza Rabbani, Begum Ashraf Abbasi and Nawaz Yusuf Talpur were also present.

She maintained that something more was to come between government and Opposition following her election as chairperson of Foreign Affairs Committee in National Assembly was unfounded. [sentence as published]

She explained that she agreed to head the committee after an offer was made and added she did so in order to make such House Committee effective.

Ms. Benazir Butto reiterated that the Opposition members have been sitting in parliament under protest.

"Unless a conducive atmosphere was created by the government only then talks can be held which will include strengthening of democratic instititions in the country", she said.

She was of the view that her election on foreign affairs committee has been by and large welcomed in the country.

Asked whether she would be prepared to play some role if asked to oppose Pakistan being declared a terrorist state, she said the PPP will always play a role for welfare and progress of Pakistan.

"But the government must first establish that it is working in this direction. We insist that government must prove its sincerity for democracy and human rights in the country".

"Government must have a positive approach on all issues with in the context of a democratic Pakistan", she stressed.

She maintained that so far no headway has ben made by the government to lay the foundation for a democratic order in Pakistan.

On prevailing situation in the Gulf, Ms. Benazir Bhutto said that it was "extremely complicated", and PPP is concerned over the escalation in the conflict in Gulf.

"We think that Pakistan should take steps to de-escalate the situation in the Gulf. We want Iraq to give up claim on Kuwait as this would divide the Arab and Muslim countries", she added. She felt that Pakistan has the capacity to play a role in de-escalating the Gulf situation.

Responding to another question, she said that on basic issues there was identity of views among the Opposition parties. In this regard she referred to the resolution of All Parties Conference demanding an interim government to hold free and fair elections.

On repatriation of Biharis she said people of Sindh have apprehensions on this issues as they feel they will be converted into a minority as all of them (Biharis) will come and settle in this province.

She was of the view that difference between people of urban and rural areas of Sindh were due to Biharis issue. She said Opposition in Sindh Assembly has requisitioned session of the House to discuss Biharis repatriation issue. She demanded that Sindh Government should oppose their repatriation as it will effect people of this province.

She recalled that when she was prime minister she had asked the foreign office and during talks with former Bangladesh President General H. M. Ershad suggested a census of Biharis living in camps in Dhaka to ascertain their number, later on these Biharis should be settled in Muslim countries and said she had offered that Pakistan will also take its share.

Bhutto Acceptance of Post Said Causing Division in PDA

BK1901143093 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 19 Jan 93 p 12

[Text] Lahore—Co-Chairperson Benazir Bhutto, who faces isolation within her PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] alliance after accepting chairpersonship of the [House] Foreign Relations Committee, received another jolt when a strong faction of her party led by Farooq Leghari, Salman Tasir, and Khwaja Tariq Rahim threatened to distance themselves from her controversial decision.

PAKISTAN OBSERVER learnt from inside sources that several senior members of her party who were already incensed at her autocratic behaviour were now demanding an increased role for Begum Nusrat Bhutto in the party.

Some of these leaders were also openly talking of aligning themselves with Mir Murtaza Bhutto, the elder son of late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

With the religious and political leadership already hostile to Benazir Bhutto, the entire PDA leadership is suspicious of the intentions of the ex-Prime Minister. Her partners in Tehrik-i-Istiqlal and Tehrik Nifaz-i-Fiqah-i-Jafria and Malik Qasim are supporting the candidature of Air Marshal Asghar Khan for presidentship without consulting Benazir, an event unthinkable a few weeks ago.

It was also learnt that the revolt may have the backing of Begum Nusrat Bhutto, who wants her son to assume the leadership of the party.

'Reconciliation' Between Government, Bhutto Viewed

BK1901135993 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 19 Jan 93 p 10

[Editorial: "Toward Reconciliation?"]

[Text] Much is being speculated about a reconciliation between the government and the opposition following Ms. Bhutto's acceptance to chair the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly. Had the democratic institutions been functioning in true parliamentary spirit, a routine matter of parliamentary working would have not assumed such dramatic proportions. Given the protracted political confrontation, this exceptional development has surprised many on both sides of political divide. It has especially upset the pro-president lobbies in the government and the opposition. While dispelling all speculations regarding a "secret deal", Ms. Bhutto has, however, hinted at the possibility of some positive movement towards a democratic atmosphere.

There is no doubt that the PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] was forced to launch an agitation for the ouster of the government, despite its resolve to work within the system, since it was pushed to the wall. On the other hand contrary to his verbal onslaught against the opposition terming it 'anti-Pakistan', the prime minister now seems to have realised the indispensability of bipartisan working of democratic institutions. He is inclined towards evolving a working relationship with the parliamentary Opposition. Whether the current conciliatory tone will lead to a thaw between the government and the opposition or not, it is indicative of a significant shift in the stance of both sides. It appears that some tactical adjustments are taking place between the main contenders of mainstream politics.

The most positive aspect of this symbolic development is that, perhaps, the two major parliamentary forces are now moving towards the right direction. Instead of becoming hostage to the non-representative centres of power, Mian Nawaz Sharif should have taken all possible measures to remove the genuine grievances of the opposition after becoming the prime minister. Similarly, the PDA should not have insisted on the repetition of what had happened to its government while knowing full well that this is the president under the 8th Amendment regime who has been the source of destabilisation of parliamentary democracy for the last seven years. But the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittihad—Islamic Democratic Alliance] government alone is to be blamed for the adoption of "oust-Nawaz only" tactic by the PDA. The Mian Nawaz Sharif government should immediately take necessary steps to ensure a working relationship with the opposition. Putting the resistibility of filing references against the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] on the interim government will not absolve it of its responsibility. There should also be no problem in evolving a consensus on electoral reforms and other strategic issues, such as national security and the crisis in Sindh. If democratic institutions are to be strengthened, the IJI should also agree to dispense with the 8th Amendment, and put an end to a de facto system of "troika" with the cooperation of the PDA. Why cannot the PDA and the IJI agree on a consensus presidential candidate to make this august office non-controversial? Why shouldn't Mian Nawaz Sharif agree to a four-year term in the interest of political stability and continuity while Ms. Bhutto can afford to wait?

Spokesman on Illegal Indian Immigrants in Karachi

BK2001155593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Pakistan has expressed its disappointment over the latest Indian decision not to rent Jinnah House [in Bombay] to Pakistan for use as the official residence of its consul general. A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad this afternoon that the decision contradicts the Indian Government's earlier assurances. In 1980, 1981 and 1982, the Indian Ministry of External

Affairs, the foreign secretary, and even present Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, who was then the minister of external affairs, made assurances that Jinnah House would be leased to Pakistan so as to establish the Pakistani consulate in that building. The spokesman said that the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi opens a temporary visa office in Bombay every two months, where 2,500-3,000 visas are issued. The spokesman said that the Indian Government has now decided not to allow Pakistan to set up even the temporary visa office. The spokesman expressed the hope that India, in view of its earlier promises, will review the decision and cooperate with Pakistan in its efforts so that the Pakistani consulate in Bombay can fulfill its responsibilities [words indistinct].

In reply to questions on press reports about the sealing of Pakistan's southern border with India, the spokesman said that, according to an estimate, 600,000 illegal Indian immigrants are in Karachi. He said that the government is considering a number of steps to check the entry of illegal immigrants and smuggling.

In reply to another question, the spokesman said that an official delegation from Afghanistan is in Pakistan for consultations.

U.S. 'Sinister' Effort in Iraq Attacks Seen

BK1901125593 Karachi DAWN in English 19 Jan 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Targeting Iraq Again"]

[Text] The Western powers' latest move against Iraq, ostensibly to chasten President Saddam Husayn, should revive nightmarish memories of the brutal Gulf war of 1991. But in the changed circumstances of today, it is unlikely that President Bush and his allies will achieve their goals, whatever they might be. In fact, they are bound to lose the sympathy of many of their friends because their ferocious military response to Iraq's petty provocations smack of neo-imperialism of the worst kind. The cruise missile attack on Baghdad on Sunday was only the latest in a series of punishing measures the West has recently taken against Iraq. Last Wednesday American planes from an aircraft carrier in the Gulf had mounted a strike against Iraqi positions. Since December, two Iraqi aircraft have been shot down by the allies in Iraqi airspace.

All this makes painful reading. All the more so if it is recalled that Iraq has not committed any serious violation of any legal obligation. Admittedly, President Saddam has not been duly repentant and servile as a defeated dictator is expected to be. At times he has also chosen to be teasingly provocative while indulging in a foolish game of brinkmanship. But he has been careful not to step beyond the limits imposed on his country by the UN resolutions. In some ways, the Iraqi strongman has even shown deference to the US-imposed restrictions that do not have the UN's sanction. Thus, the no-fly zone over southern Iraq which he was supposed to have violated was not instituted by the UN. Similarly, his move to send his men into the demilitarised zone on the Kuwaiti border to remove some Iraqi property was under an agreement with the UNIKOM [United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission]. If Baghdad had banned flights by UN aircraft into Iraq, it was not to prevent the entry of the arms inspectors but to induce them to use Iraqi Airways aircraft which have been grounded since 1991.

In these circumstances, President Bush will find it difficult to justify his moves which are worse than a case of overreaction. Indeed, one suspects that the series of measures have been part of a sinister last-ditch attempt by the American leader at the close of his presidency to oust the dictator whose downfall he had sought to hasten when the Gulf war was launched two years ago. This despot, ironically, stayed on to gloat over Mr Bush's election defeat in November. The hardening of American policy towards Iraq is, however, not an act of statesmanship and could leave a bad legacy for Mr Clinton from which he would find it difficult to extricate himself.

President Bush has also brought discredit to his country by causing America's sense of justice and evenhandedness in world affairs to be widely questioned. If Washington can use force against Iraq for its supposed violations of UN resolutions why has it spared the Israelis and the Serbs in Bosnia both of whom have committed graver violations on this and other scores? Moreover, the American policy has been extremely damaging for the United Nations. At a time when conditions are most conducive for the world body to play a positive role in international affairs, the US has stepped in to seize control of the UN and use it as an instrument of American foreign policy. The handling of Iraq's case also confirms the worst fears of Third World countries that the end of the cold war spells the beginning of American hegemony in the new global order. Saddam Husayn has chosen to be defiant of the only surviving superpoower. That has invited for him the West's retribution repeatedly and in its cruellest form. That is the message the US is sending to other governments who may fail to fall in line with Washington's diktat.

'Fresh Beginning' After Latest Iraq Attacks Urged

BK1901130393 Islamabad THE NATION in English 19 Jan 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Excessive Response"]

[Text] The US Cruise missile attack on Baghdad, supposedly to target a nuclear fabricating plant, is a story with as many holes in it as the best Swiss cheese. The plant in question, which the Iraqis claim is a mechanical engineering factory, is on the UN weapons inspectors' lists and has already been inspected many times. The plant is located twenty kilometres from the centre of Baghdad. What excuse then have the Americans to offer for the missile which hit the al-Rashid Hotel in the centre of Baghdad, where an international Islamic conference in support of Iraq is being held and where most of the foreign media people are housed? This is not the only fishy story the Americans have used in the past few days to justify their armed attacks on Iraq. The tension began over the deployment of SAM missiles in the so called no-fly zone over southern Iraq. The justification for this as well as the no-fly zone over Kurdish areas in the north, zones which Baghdad has described as the core of the confrontation, rests on the dubious foundations of a UNSC [UN Security Council] resolution couched in general terms to protect the Kurds and the Shias. It does not specifically sanction any no-fly zones. Not only do the US, Britain and France arrogate to themselves the right to control the skies over these zones, they also insist in the next breath that the safety of the UN weapons inspectors flights over these areas be guaranteed by Iraq! The raids by the Iraqis across the unilaterally re-demarcated border which has ceded Iraqi territory to Kuwait may not have had prior permission from the UN Observors Mission, but did it deserve the disproportionate response of the US, Britain and France? Some commentators believe the Iraqi raids were a desperate reaction to the hurt continuing sanctions are causing. President Bush's repeated insistence on "compliance with UN resolutions" is double-speak for imposing the Western will on the region, irrespective of the merits of the particular "transgression". Its real purpose is the hope that continued punishment will create the internal conditions for Saddam's overthrow, who has shown a remarkable talent for survival against all the odds. Paradoxically, it is the Allies' belligerence which has solidified internal support for Saddam while causing misgivings amongst the Gulf war coalition's own partners.

All this in itself would be reason enough for the US and its allies to rethink their objectives and methods. But what lends such a review added urgency is the suspicion that the outgoing President Bush, due to hand over tomorrow, is motived by a degree of personal animus for Saddam which has blinded him to the possible negative fallout of the unreasonable pillorying of Iraq. One hopes that his successor, who presented himself as the candidate of idealism and hope but has started backtracking already on some of his campaign pledges, will exercise his own judgment and not be misled into keeping the US policy in the area a hostage to Mr Bush's predilections. Victory in the Gulf war has not given the West the right to interfere, in blatant disregard of the UN Charter, in the internal political affairs of Iraq. A fresh beginning would imply working with the Iraqi authorities to bring Iraq back into the mainstream of the comity of nations and putting the legacy of the past two years to rest.

Foreign Office Position on Iraq Praised

BK1601121793 Islamabad THE NATION in English 16 Jan 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Double Standards"]

[Text] By expressing its opposition to the use of force in the Gulf and urging the UN Security Council to adopt a 'more even-handed approach' towards world crises, the Pakistan Foreign Office has for a change not only said the right thing but also at the right time. There is a limit to which hypocrisy and duplicity can be condoned in international affairs, no matter how one-sided and arbitrary the global power-structure has been turned into, and Pakistan can no longer afford to turn a blind eye to such blatantly selective show of force. Needless to say, Pakistan was among the countries which had unequivocally condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and the Foreign Office has now rightly deplored Baghdad's renewed claim over Kuwait, but the punishment cannot be out of proportion to the offence, and Pakistan would have been guilty of unabashed expediency had it not distanced itself from the latest act of 'international gangsterism'. There are still people in positions of authority who advocate currying favour with the Americans at any cost, and caution against taking a line at variance with Washington's dictates. Notwithstanding the bitter historic reality that we have been for too long taken for a ride and it is time to charter an independent course of action in world affairs, the issue at stake in the latest US-led strike against Iraq is much wider than how to deal with a maverick like Saddam Husayn.

'What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander', is how the Foreign Office spokesman has pointed out the fallacy of selective action by the UN, while urging the world body to apply the principles applicable in Iraq in other 'threats of a similar kind', such as Bosnia, Kashmir and Palestine. Why Pakistan should have taken the position it has is thus self-explanatory. If the UN is to continue to function as a ruber stamp and its sole job is to legitimise the US diktat, then double standards in dealing with world crises is likely to remain the order of the day. And Pakistan's self-interest calls for joining hands with forces willing to take a position against this manipulated world order. If we wish the world body to be guided by the prinicples of justice and fair deal in responding to atrocities in Bosnia or Kashmir, we will have to stand firm in opposing all actions which are patently one-sided and prompted by the exigencies of power-politics rather than the desire to punish the aggressor. It is indeed welcome that Pakistan Foreign Office has made a convincing bid to expose the double standards that charactrise the policies of the overlords of the world and their handmaiden—the UN. There is no other honourable option for a country like Pakistan which has been for years seeking justice for the oppressed Kashmiris but has cut no ice in quarters which claim to be the custodians of world peace.

Signing of Chemical Weapons Convention Criticized

BK1701134093 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 17 Jan 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Pakistan Trapped"]

[Text] Representatives of 120 countries gathered in Paris to approve the Chemical Weapons convention and sign documents banning the use, production and stockpiling of chemical arms. Most of the Arab countries refused to sign the document on the plea that they were not really against it but saw no point in endorsing a ban on chemical weapons as long as Israel refuses to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. Representatives of Jordan, Kuwait and Yemen were not present on the second day of the 8-day ceremony and Libya which had earlier taken up the stand that it would approve the accord finally decided to abstain. Iraq which also had chemical weapons did not respond to the invitation to sign the treaty. However, Pakistan thought it fit to sign the convention. The result of signing this convention was disclosed by this newspaper long ago and it was asserted that what the non-signing of the NPT could not achieve would be obtained by this convention to which, unfortunately, Pakistan has now become a signatory. It is a matter of deep regret that Pakistan should succumb to such pressures and agree to open its facilities to inspection since the convention makes it mandatory that the member states would agree to the inspection and scrutiny of their installations. This becomes more horrendous when considered that the technology pressed into service to check chemical wapons installations were the same which were used to locate nuclear facilities.

We had said it earlier and would reiterate that we are unable to support such a proposition. Under the convention any country can complain that another country possessed chemical weapons facilities and the country complained against would have to open up its facilities not within days, but within hours. India's case is entirely different since it is acknowledged that it is a nuclear state having exploded the weapon in 1974. So far Pakistan has resisted any attempt to allow inspection of its facilities. The signing of the convention by Pakistan would nullify the consistent policy of Pakistan which was related to its own sensibilities regarding its independence and sovereignty. It is a matter of deep regret that in spite of consistent Press reports on this grave issue the matter was not discussed in Parliament.

The Foreign Office owes an explanation to the public why it decided to tread such a dangerous path which impinges on the sovereignty and security of the country.

'Hounding' by Indian, Jewish Lobbies Viewed

BK1501155193 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Jan 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Who Is Terrorist?"]

[Text] Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo informed members of the National Assembly on Wednesday that Washington had not put Pakistan on the list of countries promoting international terrorism. Answering questions on reports alleging that Washington had given Pakistan six months time to prove that it had nothing to do with terrorism, Mr. Kanjoo said there was no truth in the reports as the US had not given Pakistan any such warning. "Pakistan will not give a second thought to its principled stand on the Kashmir issue and will continue to extend to the innocent people of Kashmir its moral and diplomatic support," he said and denied the allegation that Pakistan is backing Sikh militants against New Delhi. Pakistan, he asserted, had nothing to do with troubles plaguing India. On the contrary, Pakistan had taken concrete measures to promote friendly relations with India. Six rounds of talks between the foreign secretaries of the two countries had already been held to identify the precise nature of the problems souring Indo-Pak relations. Mentioning the recent brutal violence against Pakistani diplomats and the demolition of Babri Masjid [mosque] by Hindu fundamentalists, he said New Delhi had itself promoted violence and discontent through its policies which had given birth to serious problems.

Pakistan has lately been the focus of speculative reports dished out by Indian mass media in collaboration with the Jewish-controlled Western print and electronic media. Viewed closely, these baseless reports appear to be intended to achieve specific targets. For instance, over the past few weeks, Indian media has intensified its poisonous propaganda against Pakistan in its bid to divert world attention from the brutal repression let loose by New Delhi in Occupied Kashmir. It is no secret that both Indian and Jewish lobbies in Washington have been working over the decades against Pakistani interests. First, it was the bogey of an "Islamic bomb" and now there are allegations of Pakistan's involvement in the Indian-occupied Kashmir and Punjab. One way or the other, Pakistan has been singled out for such hounding despite all evidence and assurances to the contrary. It is the Indian security agencies which have unleashed relentless terrorism on innocent Kashmiris. It can more aptly be termed as state terrorism let loose by New Delhi. A recent instance of such terrorism is the brutal murders in Sopore in the Indian-occupied Kashmir. Pakistan has held discussions with the US Government at the diplomatic level and has drawn a clear distinction between legitimate political support for a just struggle for self-determination in Kashmir and allegations of material assistance to groups allegedly involved in terroristic activities. As a clear proof of Pakistan's sincerity to deal with this issue of "terrorism", Islamabad has suggested a number of measures to rule out any possibility of outside involvement. These include posting of international observers on both sides of the Line of Control and urging the US Administration as well as international human rights organisations to look into the atrocities being perpetrated by the Indian security agencies in the Valley. Such practical measures and assurances should be enough to establish the peaceful intentions of Islamabad and deter anyone from branding it a terrorist state.

Sri Lanka

Recent Tamil Activities Chronicled

LTTE Ship Said Destroyed by India

BK1801120093 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Text] According to LANKAPUVATH, the national news agency, LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists were killed when their ship M.V. Ahad was destroyed by the Indian Navy in Indian territorial waters while it was carrying explosives and weapons to Jaffna. The most senior cadre killed was Sathasivam Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, who was on his way to Jaffna to take over the deputy leadership of the LTTE Jaffna replacing A.V. Subramaniam.

Official sources said that Kittu and other senior cadres had taken cyanide capsules and blown the ship up along with themselves. Meanwhile, official sources allegedly said that the recent overtures made by Prabhakaran stating that the LTTE was willing to enter into negotiations to settle the Northeast conflict was a mere facade. (?Rather), he was playing for time for the arrival of the weapons ship. According to the intelligence reports received about two months ago the Indian and Sri Lankan authorities had been tipped off that the LTTE was bringing the weapons ship to Sri Lanka for an offensive against the Sri Lankan Government. The LTTE leader, Prabhakaran's, demand for the lifting of the no-go zone in the Jaffna lagoon was a ploy to move terrorists and weapons between the Jaffna peninsula and the mainland. Prabhakaran in his meeting last Sunday with the bishop of Colombo had categorically refused to lift the blockade of the North and South of Elephant Pass on the main Colombo-Jaffna A-9 Highway for military reasons. If this highway is opened, as has been done by the security forces, there will be free movement of civilians and food and other essential items to and from Jaffna.

LTTE Ambush Patrol in Revenge

BK1801130893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1216 GMT 18 Jan 93

[Text] COLOMBO, Jan 18 (AFP)—Tamil guerrillas ambushed an army patrol and killed 14 soldiers in northeastern Sri Lanka Monday to avenge the deaths of 10 rebels who went down with an arms ship detected by India, the military here said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fired rocket propelled grenades and small arms at the army route clearing patrol at Pulmudai despite a fresh alert against rebel strikes in the region, officials said. They said three soldiers escaped with serious injuries and security forces believed that they killed at least five militants who took part in the ambush carried out in broad daylight.

"We had alerted our men to watch out for attacks. Unfortunately, this group (of soldiers) got caught in an ambush," a military source here said. Troops were ordered Sunday to go on the offensive to pre-empt Tiger strikes.

Intelligence reports had warned that Tigers would carry out attacks against security forces to take revenge for Saturday's death of top LTTE leader Sathasivak Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, and nine others.

New Delhi has already demanded tighter security for its mission here amid fears of LTTE attacks against its sea-front high commission (embassy) building sandwiched between the colonial Galle Face Hotel and the U.S. Aid office.

The LTTE's clandestine radio station, the Voice of Tigers, Monday announced three days of mourning for Kittu and the nine others who died aboard the LTTE-owned cargo vesssel, the M.V. Ahad, which sank Saturday, off South India.

The Voice of Tigers wanted Tamils in the embattled northeast to mourn the deaths and played sombre music as a sign of respect for the men who had a "veera maranam," or martyr's death.

An LTTE radio intercept gave the noms de guerre of other victims as Lieutenant Colonel Kittusiri, Major Velan, Sea Tigers Jeeva, Gunaseelan, Roshan and Nayagan, Lieutenant Amudan, Nallavan and Pujeevan.

Defence officials said Tigers may be bitter over the death of Kittu who was an explosives expert who had designed LTTE's home-made mortar bombs which have an effective range of 500 to 700 meters (yards).

Both Sri Lankan and Indian authorities have said that the ship was bringing arms, ammunition and explosives to the island's LTTE- controlled northern Jaffna peninsula, a charge denied by a Tiger spokesman in Paris.

The LTTE's Paris-based spokesman Lawrance Tilakar said that Kittu was carrying with him a Western-backed peace plan to end the deadlock in finding a soulution to the long-drawn ethnic strife.

Tiger guerrillas are leading a 20-year-old campaign to establish an independent Tamil homeland in the island's northeast where minority Tamils are concentrated. Thousands have died in bitter fighting.

LTTE Blames India for Deaths of 10

BK2001071693 Hong Kong AFP in English 0541 GMT 20 Jan 93

[Text] Colombo, Jan 20 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's dominant Tamil Tiger guerrillas Wednesday held New Delhi responsible for the deaths of 10 top rebels aboard a gun-running ship which sank in flames after being intercepted by the Indian navy.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) issued a statement acknowledging that its top leader Sathasivam Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, and nine others died in the high-seas drama off the south Indian coast Saturday.

"The LTTE condemns the acts of the Indian navy and the Indian government which caused the deaths of Colonel Kittu and nine other cadres on January 16.

"These criminal and unlawful acts by the Indian government against the struggle of a people for freedom and their thirst for peace, have caused a deep wound and left a sense of burning anger," the statement said.

However the LTTE statement, issued from its London office, did not give details of how Kittu died. Tigers are often known to commit suicide to evade capture.

Both Sri Lankan and Indian authorities have said that the LTTE- owned ship, the M. V. Ahad, was carrying arms, ammunition and explosives to the island's embattled northern Jaffna peninsula when it was detected.

The ship went down with Kittu and the nine other top rebel fighters after it caught fire under circumstances that are still unclear. Tigers have announced three day's of morning for the Tiger victims.

Tigers have stepped up their attacks against troops to avenge the deaths of their top men and since Monday have killed at least 19 security personnel.

New Delhi has asked for tighter security for its diplomatic mission in Colombo. Tiger guerrillas are leading a 20-year-old struggle to establish an independent Tamil homeland in the island's northern and eastern regions. Thousands have died in bitter fighting.

LTTE Intelligence Chief Hurt in Jaffna Attack

BK1901114893 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Jan 93

[Text] Latest reports from Jaffna confirmed that LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] intelligence chief Pottu Amman had lost a leg when he was attacked with a hand grenade at Kopai in Jaffna a few days ago. The dispatch further states that Pottu Amman is lying in a critical condition in the Jaffna Hospital.

Pottu Amman's Pajero vehicle driver was killed in the attack made by one of several anti-LTTE units in Jaffna. Four others were traveling in the vehicle. Five persons have been arrested and executed by the LTTE in connection with the attack on Pottu Amman. Reports state that the victims are the members of the growing number of anti-LTTE cells. Their names were given as Khajravelu, a CTB [Ceylon Tourist Board] depot inspector of Kokkuvil West; Prarajasingham, a businessman from Vallipuram; the depot inspector of Kondavil West, Sridurai; Mandavassan, a businessman from Pudukkudiviruppu; and Vaidamuthu Shivapadam, a businessman from Kopai.